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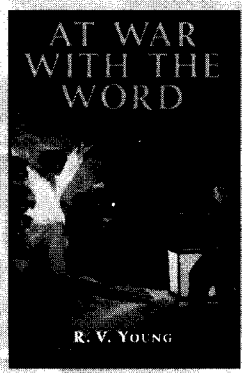

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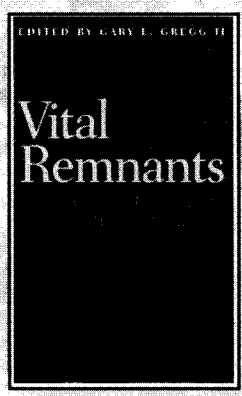

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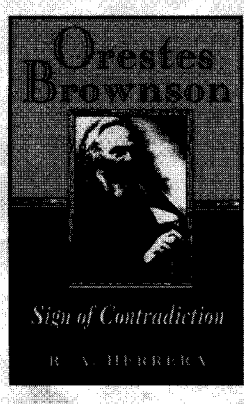

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Seeing Russia Plain

The Russian Crisis and American Intelligence

Fritz W. Ermarth

WHENEVER the CIA is accused of spinning its intelligence analysis to fit policy preferences, it replies tartly that it "tells it like it is." For the most part, it really does. But in the case of Russia, telling it like it is, and seeing it like it really is, are both very difficult. This article explores some of these difficulties.

The saddest disappointment of the post-Cold War era has been the failure of Russia to find and follow the path of political and economic democracy. In the long run, this disappointment may also be the most dangerous: Russia is a country that spans ten time zones and contains thousands of nuclear weapons and other deadly materials besides.

Most troubling of all the effects of the Russian crisis is its impact on Russian hearts and minds. When hammer and sickle gave way to Russia's tricolor in 1991, Russians believed themselves destined for democracy and a free-market economy, the two key constituents of what they called simply a "normal society." They also exhibited admiration for the United States unequaled by any other of America's adversaries after the great conflicts of this century. Such attitudes are now hardly perceptible. They have been replaced by hostility toward what has been foisted on them in the name of democracy and capitalism, and toward the United States, which most believe to have been in some degree responsible for the failures and perversions of "reform."

The hostility to reform now ascendant in Russia stimulates forces that could for generations hence take the country on another detour into the swamp of authoritarianism, muddled *étatism* and social stagnation. Neither Stalin's nor Brezhnev's Soviet Union can be restored. But some form of weak, irresponsible state authority over a disordered society could sink roots that would corrupt the capacity of new generations to truly govern themselves.

At the bottom of this reflection lies a most disturbing thought. What if the Russians simply cannot make it? What if the post-communist experience of Russia means that the "self-evident" truths of Jefferson and Lincoln are not for all people, but only for some? In its aspirations, Russia has been oriented toward Europe and the Atlantic world for a thousand years. Its failure at a time of high promise finally to enter that world would not only be a tragedy for Russia itself but a deep injury to Euro-Atlantic values. The perils of nuclear and other junk emanating from Russia are frightening enough. But the grim possibility at stake in the Russian experience—that

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Fritz W. Ermarth retired from the CIA in October 1998 after a career that included chairmanship of the National Intelligence Council and two tours on the National Security Council staff. This article was reviewed by CIA's Publications Review Board to prevent disclosure of classified information and cleared; clearance does not constitute endorsement of assertions or judgments in the article.

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civilized self-government is not for all people—is more frightening still.

Where is Russia at the moment? The Moscow media pundit Igor Malashenko recently characterized its present situation as "the dead end of the beginning", the complete failure of a false start.[1] Russia's perennial democrat-in-opposition, Grigory Yavlinsky, has characterized the Yeltsin period and its misfired reforms as the true end of the Soviet era, citing in particular how it has been dominated by Soviet *nomenklaturchiki* of various stripes.[2] Yavlinsky sees the prospect for a fresh start, grounded on post-communist generations and ignited by victories for sensible democrats, notably himself, in upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections.

Whatever else it is, the present moment of fading Yeltsin and aging Primakov, a kind of interregnum, should be a moment for stock-taking. We, too, have a bit of an interregnum on our hands.

Aspects of the Russian Crisis

RUSSIA'S CRISIS is widely identified with the financial meltdown of August and the replacement of the reformist Kiriyenko government by one whose top figures, Yevgeny Primakov and Yuri Maslyukov, are Soviet-era functionaries evidently committed to achieving political stability by not doing much of anything, at least at the time of writing. These developments are but symptoms of more long-lived disorders.

The revolution of 1991 was not as revolutionary as it seemed. The termites had long been chewing away within, even before the wrecking balls of glasnost and perestroika assailed from without. The Soviet system collapsed because a large portion of the *nomenklatura*, those with hands directly on state property, deserted the CPSU and the Soviet state to pursue business interests and nationalist political agendas. This had been going on sub rosa for years; the events of late 1991 only unveiled and accelerated the process. As a result, the post-Soviet scene in Russia is dominated by the people, relationships and habits of the late Soviet era, particularly in the nexus of property and power. Relatedly, the process left the Russian Communist Party, the only real party on the scene, an assembly of angry losers: a Soviet-style intelligentsia at the top, and a vast population of pensioners and pensioner-like workers at the bottom who were not in a position to seize property in the name of the market. A substantial majority of the Russian population is, therefore, now made up of people who are fearful about their shaky hold on new-found wealth, or who sit astride assets that do not produce real wealth, or who are resentful about having no places at the trough. Their understanding of, and perceived stake in, real political and economic reform is weak at best.

Russia possesses two important features of democracy: elections and a more or less free press. But it does not have the essence of democracy: an assured, law-based process for selecting leaders and policies, and for protecting rights. The prospects for attaining real democracy and preserving existing democratic features are uncertain. Russian politics is based less on principles, programs and parties, than on personalities and shifting coalitions among clans and their hold on evanescent money. The results of politics are less mandates and real power to effect policies than pecking orders and opportunities for aggrandizement. At the summit sits a president with vast nominal powers under a skewed constitution, but little real power to influence the life of the nation—save for starting local wars.

Power continues to leach out of Moscow into the regions. But there is no clear sign of stable federalism, as opposed to fragmentation or worse. Elections are generally freer and fairer than in Belarus or Kazakhstan. It is

[1]Remarks by Malashenko at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, DC, November 4, 1998.

[2]Remarks by Yavlinsky at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC, December 17, 1998.

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more apt to call them free-for-all and fair-or-foul, since money, manipulation and political violence continue to play a large role. There is freedom of the press, in that ideologically diverse media host lively commentary on Russia's affairs. But Russia's media are controlled by the politico-business clans who dominate national and regional politics. "Not by accident", as Stalin would have said, are journalists prominent among the bankers, tycoons, mafiosi and politicians assassinated since 1991. Neither vice nor virtue is a sure protection in this turbulence.

The glass of Russian democracy, while not half-full, is assuredly not empty. Elections occur and matter. The press presents the real stuff of democratic debate. In the regions, devolution of Muscovite power spottily shows real local self-government. Polls show that Russians, for all their alienation, still associate their desire for a normal society with free thought, free politics and free enterprise. When they say they want a strong hand in power, most mean the opposite of Stalin's arbitrary ruthlessness. They want a government that works, an economy that works, and, underlying it all, law and order. They want a voice in crafting those things. This is not an exotic agenda.

RUSSIA'S ECONOMIC failure is clearly at the heart of the general crisis. Finding the root causes and essential nature of this failure is daunting. That the August crisis of devaluation and default is a spinoff of a deeper predicament is clear. But what *is* that predicament? It is not the collapse of the financial bubble, a bubble blown out of a brand of snake oil that government and speculators sold to each other. It is not the budget indiscipline of the Russian government. Lacking real power to act with fiscal responsibility, it chose to survive on short-term, high-interest credit and not paying most of its bills. It had willing and well-credentialed accomplices who justly deserve to be now holding empty bags. Again, it is not the absence of real investment in the "real" economy, or the ubiquity of capital flight. These are all effects, not causes.

The essence of the economic debacle is twofold: the collapse of production, which has brought GNP down to less than half of 1990 levels; and the impoverishment of the majority of the Russian people, with something like fifty million now living below what is itself a ridiculously low poverty line. The unmeasurable effect of the informal economy and widespread moonlighting in ameliorating these dismal conditions does not substantially change the picture. They merely explain how Russians manage to survive. The collapse impoverished the Russian state beyond the capacity of oil exports and financial legerdemain to sustain.

Russian politics revolves around the question of who is to blame for the economic collapse, even more than who might conceivably offer a path out of it. The root causes lie in a combination of a) the decay of the Soviet economy for decades even before perestroika, b) the hugely destabilizing actions of Gorbachev, and c) the misguided and inadequate policies of the post-1991 reformers. There is plenty of blame to go around.

The reformers of the Yeltsin period clearly sought to break up the collapsing structures of the Soviet order so that they could not possibly stage a political comeback. This was primary. Their secondary aim was to encourage the emergence of a true market economy—through elimination of price controls and other regulations, as strict a monetarism as they could manage, and privatization of state assets. It is impossible to exaggerate how much this aim rested on the dogma, embraced by both the reformers and their Western supporters, that, as the state was removed from the economy, real market capitalism would arise naturally and rapidly even in the conditions of Sovietized Russia.

This did not happen. What did happen was a puzzling combination of some genuine reform, failed reform, perverted reform, no reform and deep depression. The Russian experience also made glaringly obvious a tru-

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ism too often neglected by the reformers and their Western allies: market capitalism depends on a pervasive environment of congenial law, business custom and skill, and popularly respected institutions. These took centuries for the West to evolve; history left Poland and other Central European states more receptive to them; history left Russia without them, and with a political culture inimical to their creation.

The largest part of the Russian economy is what two American economists, Clifford Gaddy and Barry Ickes, have called the Virtual Economy.[3] Other experts quarrel with their analysis, but their metaphor is instructive. The Virtual Economy is, in essence, the living rubble of the old Soviet economy—i.e., the old state enterprises—without the Soviet state machinery to hold it together. It continues to function by using barter and other non-monetary devices to generate products less valuable than the required inputs, while pretending to add value. Managers pocket cash revenues and keep workers pseudo-employed in company-town settings. Given the huge populations and interests involved, these dinosaurs refuse to commit suicide through bankruptcy or what the IMF gently calls "restructuring." Except for private plots and some farms that work for McDonalds, most of agriculture is sadly mired in this sector.

Beyond the Virtual Economy is what the Russians call wild capitalism, mistaken by many as a reformed economy. This is where the "new Russians", working with organized crime and corrupt officialdom, extract wealth as quickly as possible and send abroad what they don't ostentatiously consume. The most powerful actors in this sector are deeply invested in phony banking, controlled media and patronage politics.

A third portion of the economy is an archipelago of real capitalism, in which genuine private entrepreneurs assemble capital and put it to productive work, mostly, but not solely, in small service and consumer-oriented businesses. This is the smallest part of the economy, politically and economically the most vulnerable—but also the most promising.

Sorting out this triadic domain is a mighty challenge for analysis, policy making and investment. It cannot be done at a distance. Many enterprises participate in all three sectors. Much of the illusion about reform in Russia rests on the mistaken beliefs that the first sector is receding, that the second is really like the third, and that the third is increasingly dominant. Collusion in this illusion lies at the heart of the policy failures of reformers and their Western supporters.

There are other aspects of the Russian economic crisis well deserving of treatment, which space does not allow: the collapsing physical infrastructure, calamitous environmental conditions and the public health disaster. One topic deserving more than a few words is crime and corruption.

What Did We Know and When Did We Know It?

THE CRIMINALIZATION of the Russian state is now a standard theme in assessment of the Russian crisis by both Russian and American analysts.[4] It is also a common thread in all eulogies to Galina Starovoitova, the liberal Duma member recently assassinated in St. Petersburg. According to the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, it is an offensive stereotype brandished by Hollywood.[5] Unfortunately, it is much more than that.

Russian crime and corruption are deeply embedded in the failure of Russia to advance toward real democracy and capitalism since

[3]Gaddy and Ickes, "Russia's Virtual Economy", *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 1998).

[4]See, for example, David Satter's "The Rise of the Russian Criminal State", *Prism*, September 4, 1998; and Vladimir Shlapentokh, "Russia: Privatization and Illegalization of Social and Political Life", *Washington Quarterly* (Winter 1996).

[5]Speech by Talbott at Stanford University, November 6, 1998, expanded in a guest contribution to *The Economist*, November 21, 1998.

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1991, as cause, consequence and symbol of Russian realities. They constitute, in the perceptive terms of a senior State Department official with whom I have discussed the topic, an "environmental problem." They are pervasive in government, politics, business and security affairs; even foreign relations are affected. They are regional, national and international, and can threaten America by enabling the proliferation of weapons and by infiltrating American business and politics.[6]

At the crime end of the spectrum are assassinations, theft, protection rackets, drug and arms trafficking. At the corruption end one finds bribery for all manner of state services, privileged arrangements for export and import without taxes and duties, insider privatization deals at fire-sale prices, speculation for private profit with state funds, off-budget commercial operations by government agencies. Hardly any institutions or public figures are free from taint, certainly not the police.

Crime and corruption lead naturally to the offensive stereotype noted by Talbott, because they are so extensive and dramatic. Most businessmen, however, regard organized crime and contract killing as less of a problem than is capricious corruption in government. A viable legal and tax system could legitimate and regulate many now dubious activities, such as private security services and tax-exempt organizations. But they are undeniably a huge part of the Russian political and economic crisis, undermining the state, deterring investment, spurring capital flight and alienating society.

This raises a touchy question: long a visible, ubiquitous and powerful threat to reform, should the extent of Russian crime and corruption not have warned American policymakers that Russian reforms were not on track? A recent article in the *New York Times* raised this question obliquely by reporting allegations that the Clinton administration ignored or discouraged intelligence about corruption in the Yeltsin regime.[7] I can shed some light on this matter by recollecting what I observed from the sidelines, tracking the topic and the struggles of intelligence analysts to report it.

To start with, any analyst worth his salt should have been alert to the threat to reforms posed by Russian crime and corruption. What first-year Russian history student does not remember the following apocryphal exchange: Czar Nicholas I tells his son, "You and I are the only ones in Russia who do not steal"—and the son replies, "Yes, father, but that's because we own everything." Here one begins to understand the shaky status of private property in Russia since the Mongols. All students of Soviet history heard such aphorisms as "*blat vishe Stalina*" (corrupt influence is higher than Stalin) or "Soviet power is built on *matye*, *blatye* and *tuftye*" (profanity, corruption and falsification). Arguably the most important development in the history of Russian organized crime occurred in the late Stalin years: the "Bitches' War", in which old-time *vory v zakonye* ("thieves under their own law", who refused any dealings with the state) battled the "bitches" (new-type crooks who found collaboration with state authorities, in running the gulag for example, quite acceptable). The "bitches" came out ahead. Soviet totalitarianism did not eliminate crime and corruption; rather it made the *nomenklatura* the greatest mafia of all.

Crime and corruption grew visibly after Stalin, especially in the late Brezhnev years. The scandals of Boris the Gypsy, Galina Brezhneva's diamonds and her MVD general husband Churbanov (who later went to jail) played a significant role in Yuri Andropov's rise and were widely reported in the West. In 1985, based on work by two superb CIA analysts, the National Intelligence Council pro-

[6]Frank Cilluffo and Gerrard Burke, eds., "Russian Organized Crime", Global Organized Crime Project, CSIS Task Force Report, Washington, DC, 1997.

[7]James Risen, "Gore Rejected CIA Evidence of Russian Corruption", *New York Times*, November 23, 1998.

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duced the first and only comprehensive National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on the internal condition of the Soviet system (since entirely declassified).[8] It identified growing crime and corruption as a major pathology threatening the Soviet system. Konstantin Simis and Arkadii Vaksberg wrote books that spelled it all out.[9]

Toward the very end of the Gorbachev era, in May 1991, I vividly recall the eminent Russian sociologist, Vladimir Shlapentokh, warning a conference of intelligence community analysts that the criminalization of Russian society was the most profound trend we had to assess.

FOR ME personally—and for a number of younger analysts more influential than me in later years—an important learning experience was the "Saga of the KGB Money." In mid-spring 1992, early in the Yeltsin regime, a retired colleague visited me to report that the international detective firm for which he now worked had been hired by the Yeltsin-Gaidar government to find vast sums essentially stolen by the KGB on behalf of itself and the CPSU and deposited abroad in bank accounts and front companies. Might not U.S. intelligence help to recover this money for the benefit of Russian reforms?

Our specialists on the KGB had, indeed, observed such activity since the late 1980s.[10] Subsequent evidence reveals that it stemmed from top-level CPSU instructions in the mid-1980s. Using semi-private cooperatives, the KGB sold cheaply acquired Soviet commodities abroad at world prices, putting the proceeds into disguised foreign accounts and front companies, including, according to many public sources, the later notorious Nordex case. Initially the KGB objective was simply commercial cover. But the program evolved into operating businesses for off-budget revenues, and from there into avenues for squirreling away funds for the safe retirement or political comeback of embattled communist leaders. Lines of business came to include money laundering, arms and drug trafficking, and other plainly criminal activities. Before long, intelligence, business, politics and crime blurred indistinguishably into each other.

What sums were involved? Some in the U.S. intelligence community estimated about $20 billion. But there was a wide range of uncertainty: one private analysis I learned about later estimated $4-6 billion; Russian press speculations ran to $100 billion. By all reckonings the amounts were very substantial.

Could U.S. intelligence help find the money? Specialists in collection disciplines informed me that we could indeed help, although at some risk to our sources, should, for example, court cases expose them. It would be rather similar to tracking money in pursuit of drug traffickers.

But should the U.S. government render such help to Russia? For a policy decision, the late Ed Hewitt, then running Soviet affairs on the National Security Council, assembled officials from State, Treasury, Defense and the intelligence community. The answer was no. Some worried about risk to intelligence sources. But the main rationale was the following: capital flight is capital flight. We can no more help Russia retrieve such money than we can help Brazil or Argentina. If they get the economic fundamentals right, the money will return. I cannot remember whether anybody put it so explicitly, but the implication was clear: it doesn't matter who has the money or how it was acquired, even if by theft; so long as it is private, it will return to

[8]National Intelligence Estimate 11-18-85, "Domestic Stresses on the Soviet System."

[9]Simis, *USSR: The Corrupt Society* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982); and Vaksberg, *The Soviet Mafia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992).

[10]The most extensive analysis of this phenomenon that I have found is the so far unpublished manuscript by Richard Palmer in collaboration with Vladimir Brovkin, *The New Russian Oligarchy: The Nomenklatura, the KGB, and the Mafiya*. It contains unique documentation of high-level CPSU sponsorship of this operation as well as new details about its execution in the field.

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do good things if there is a market.

About a year later, my retired colleague updated me on subsequent developments. On its own, his company located substantial funds expatriated by the KGB. It informed its client and suggested approaches for recovering the funds. By that time, however, the Russian government no longer seemed interested. Obviously, top officials and organizations had found ways to access the funds that did not require, indeed would be disrupted by, official efforts to repatriate them. When some while later I read an interview in which Pavel Borodin, the long-time quartermaster of Yeltsin's Kremlin, proudly reported that he managed several hundred private companies to bring in off-budget revenues, I had a feeling I knew where he got his start-up capital. I also felt I knew more about the suicide of Central Committee money handler Nikolai Kruchina after the aborted August 1991 coup. He obviously feared the most severe punishment at the hands of the post-communist regime.

Lessons to Learn

THIS TALE conveys several lessons: The great Russian rip-off began not under Yeltsin but under Gorbachev. It set the course for what accelerated after him. This should put into perspective the clamor of Russia's communists about corrupt reformers and comprador capitalists: are they outraged by the crimes committed by their former (and some present) associates, or by their failure to get a share of the loot? It should also give pause to those who pine for the lost opportunities of perestroika. While Gorbachev pondered the "500 Day Plan", his minions were already plundering Russia.

When the KGB was energetically moving money west and south, Primakov was a very influential adviser to Gorbachev on security and intelligence affairs, and Maslyukov was head of Gosplan. Did they not know what was going on? Later heading the SVR,[11] Primakov inherited control over the funds. Yet, reportedly, he urged closing down the Supreme Soviet investigation into what happened to them. It would now be a nice gesture, at least, to include a fresh look into this matter among the current Russian government's anti-corruption measures.

Washington's part in purveying in Russia the dogma that markets will triumph over all, that the ownership and source of wealth matter not, so long as it is (or seems) private, began not in the Clinton administration but under President Bush. I confess some chagrin for not making more of a fuss at the time. If the KGB's theft of Russia's money in 1985-91 was capital flight, then so was the smuggling of Nazi gold in 1945. The crime spree that began under Gorbachev and the dogmas about Russian economic reform that began in Washington under Bush had a similar fate: they both escalated to do more damage under their successors.

The burden of the foregoing is that American intelligence analysts and policymakers should have known about the Russian crime and corruption problem as a threat to reform and as a challenge to our grasp of Russian realities. Indeed, a fine analysis was done by the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research in April 1992. But subsequently, neither American intelligence analysis nor American policymakers adequately appreciated the crime and corruption problem. Why was this?

One source of trouble was what we call "politicization", the warping of intelligence analysis to fit political agendas. Risen's *New York Times* article alluded to above charged that the Clinton administration's Russia hands did not want to hear about Russian crime and corruption, especially that involving top figures, because this whole theme would complicate ongoing policies and tarnish the images of those Russian and American officials who were partners in reform and a new strategic relationship.

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[11] *Sluzhba vneshnoi rasvedki*, the Foreign Intelligence Service, the successor to the First Chief (foreign intelligence) Directorate of the KGB.

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Risen's article cites unnamed policy making officials as objecting that reporting about the corruption of high Russian figures was vague; that it contained no "smoking gun"; and that it implied that the United States should not deal with reportedly tainted figures. These objections constitute, in my judgment, admission to the charge, affirming that policymakers did resist this information and also resisted explaining why they did so. But such rebuttals were and are entirely beside the point. This analysis aimed not to support prosecution of, or estrangement from, the foreign officials being analyzed, but to inform American decisionmakers about *their* interests and the context in which *they* had to operate. The recipients evidently did not want to hear this. Their disdain for analysis about corruption of Russian politics and their Russian partners did, indeed, have a chilling effect on treatment of these topics, especially during the critical years 1993-96. Friends in the foreign service tell me that the same syndrome crimped reporting, especially on economic reform, by our embassy in Moscow. But there were other culprits than "customer sales resistance" at work.

Intelligence analysis brought its own vulnerabilities to the table, first in the form of a post-Cold War agenda that has become ever more operational (i.e., supportive of daily business) rather than focusing on understanding the big picture; and second, a management code that prizes above all serving—which can easily degenerate into pleasing—the customer. Our policymakers did not much want, and our intelligence analysts had little incentive to provide, a big-picture, long-term assessment of Russian realities. They mainly wanted to get through the next Gore-Chernomyrdin meeting, or the next quarrel about Russian missile dealings with Iran.

Another difficulty was the tendency of a large bureaucracy to pigeon-hole a topic with many aspects into one, typically turf-conscious, organization. Needed, but lacking, was a multifaceted team effort bringing together perspectives on Kremlin politics, Russian business, privatization, banking, economic reform, intelligence, foreign relations and weapons proliferation. Meanwhile, the downtown customer community was fragmented by differing agendas, such as managing our diplomacy with Moscow, supporting economic reform, stopping proliferation and thwarting international organized crime. The challenge to intelligence posed by Russian crime and corruption was in these respects similar to other topics on the post-Cold War agenda, such as weapons proliferation.

Nevertheless, efforts to paint the big picture still occurred. When they did, intellectual blinders were as important as political inhibitions in complicating the task. In particular, economic dogma was at work. Analysts with impressive credentials in economics but little appreciation for Russian history would say such things as, "Russia's robber barons will ultimately go legit, just like ours did." In doing so, they overlooked the fact that our robber barons operated in a culture of law that eventually regulated or dismantled the monopolies early industrialization allowed. American robber barons, unlike the Russian, actually built productive enterprises.

Again, some opined (as Anatoly Chubais did in a recent interview) that criminal protection rackets meet an objective economic need for security that is unmet by the state.[12] This claim reminds one of a scene in the movie *GoodFellas*, where the local Don is described as providing police protection to people who cannot go to the police. While it may be sound economics, this claim is socially perverse; it says something damning about both the situation and about those who make it. And yet again, some analysts noted that corruption and officially tolerated crime are the rule in most parts of the world, and that the United States, as an island of cleanliness, is very much the exception—thus ignoring both our own cor-

[12]Chubais makes clear that this function is an undesirable by-product of the state's failure to protect property. Interview by Yelizaveta Osetinskaya in *Segodnya*, December 1, 1998.

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ruption and what John Donne said about islands. And, of course, they neglected the fact that Russia is not Sicily, Colombia or the Philippines, but a nation of ten time zones with twenty thousand nuclear weapons. It matters whether any country is ruled by tyrants or thieves; but in the case of Russia it matters more, much more.

In the end, these failings did not, I believe, have a direct impact on U.S. policy. Rather, they represented some participation by U.S. intelligence analysis in a general pattern of overlooking the darker sides of Russian realities with respect to the Yeltsin regime, the reform team, the consequences of the monetarist dogma, the real nature of privatization, the fiscal and financial environment, and flaws in elections. Where these realities impinged dangerously on pressing U.S. security concerns, such as Russian nuclear technology and weapons dealings with Iran, there was greater willingness to accept and act on bad news. But even here, failure to face the Byzantine disorder of Moscow politics and institutions probably impeded our ability to get the desired results.

The Anatomy of Complicity

DIMITRI Simes has given a vivid commentary in these pages on American complicity in Russia's crisis (Winter 1998/99). My closing thoughts aim at some structuring of the problem for continuing debate.

The first culprit is, of course, the dogma of monetarism, its associated postulates and especially its oversights. It is clearly inadequate and often wrong for Russian conditions. Although its adherents frequently say the right things, they actually pay too little attention to the social, cultural, legal and institutional setting required for economic reform, and to the gaps between reality and pretense in various aspects of reform. Their healthy opposition to *étatism* slides into an unhealthy neglect of the need for a viable state in Russia, and, indeed, in most societies in need of major economic and political reform.

The second culprit is a cynical Washington habit of prettifying policies and glossing over their risks, failures and negative side effects. Much of Washington's action and rhetoric on Russia has been aimed at preserving the image of a foreign policy success, even as the image became more tarnished. The debacle of the past several months has elicited major "course corrections" from Secretary Albright, Deputy Secretary Talbott and others about Russia policy. But one combs through them line by line without finding any hint of an admission that past policies may have been flawed. Perhaps complete candor on a complex policy cannot be expected of any administration. But the lack of candor has serious costs. It magnifies the impact of failure when it occurs and multiplies the difficulties of recovery. Systematic misrepresentation of what our policies, our recommendations, our political support were producing has also contributed much to expunging popular respect and admiration for America among the Russian people, a tragic loss of a major political asset.

Finally, we must face the sensitive issue of cronyism. The emergence of crony politico-capitalism in Russia has been accompanied and facilitated by inadequately transparent relationships among actors in Moscow, Washington, Wall Street and Cambridge, among other places. Some of this has been at least minimally illuminated—for example, the dubious activities of Harvard's Institute for International Development.[13] George Soros' remarkable revelations about his lobbying for Russian bailout money during the summer of 1998 shed a bit of light on another aspect of this general phenomenon.[14] How can one distinguish between sus-

[13]Janine R. Wedel, *Collision and Collusion: The Strange Case of Western Aid to Eastern Europe 1989-1998* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), chapter four.

[14]Soros, *The Crisis of Global Capitalism: Open Society Endangered* (New York: Public Affairs, 1998), pp. 152-68. See also Timothy L. O'Brien, "He's Seen the Enemy and It Looks Like Him", *New York Times*, December 6, 1998.

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picious dealings that ought to be stopped and the efforts of public and influential private figures legitimately but discreetly trying to influence sensitive matters? Why do I sense that when Chubais boasted last summer that "we conned" (*my kinuli*) the IMF into the latest pledge of credits, "we" did not refer just to Russians?[15] If this is merely chumminess among a few top Russians and Americans who share belief in the monetarist dogma, it is bad enough. The larger concern is, as it were, "environmental." Our foreign policy, security and business dealings with Russia involve the gravest of stakes, enormous sums of money, and interaction among guileful, aggrandizing and, in some cases, ruthless players. These dealings have gone so deeply into a thicket of insider relationships that some bush hogging is called for. Without more transparency, there is too much room for the wasteful, the dangerous and the sinister.

Not all of America's relationship to Russia's crisis is complicit in its causes. Although to a far less extent than the Russian population, we too have been victimized by its results. A lot of U.S. taxpayer dollars now rest in overseas accounts, rather than being at work fueling Russia's recovery, as supposedly intended.

We have also been doing constructive work in service of American and Russian interests through such programs as Nunn-Lugar and efforts to safeguard nuclear materials. So far, congressional funding of these programs has not suffered from the deepening Russian crisis; but this is not guaranteed for the future. Correcting failures, protecting successes and keeping open opportunities for our policy toward Russia require a thorough stock-taking. Now is the time for it. □

[15]Interview with Chubais, *Kommersant Daily*, September 8, 1998.

Harvard's Blank Check

HIID's [Harvard University's Institute for International Development] first award from USAID for work in Russia came in 1992, during the Bush administration. Over the next four years, with the endorsement of influential proponents in the Clinton administration, HIID's Russia project would be awarded $57.7 million, all but $17.4 million of which came without competitive bidding. . . .

With the administration's backing, HIID enjoyed control over U.S.-funded Russian reform projects that was unprecedented anywhere. Although conventional wisdom holds that contractors are outsiders who can be used as levers against top-heavy government bureaucracy, this was not the case with HIID: its contractors, perceived as having exclusive access to key information and contacts, became entrenched. Harvard-connected key government officials were responsible for handing HIID not only the bulk of USAID's economic reform portfolio in Russia, but also the legal authority to manage other contractors. . . .

All this meant that, in practice, the United States, under cover of economic aid, delegated foreign policy in a crucial area, involving complicated and controversial choices, to Harvard University—a private entity. This arrangement eventually came under scrutiny. In 1996 the GAO was asked by Congress to investigate HIID activities in Russia and Ukraine and issued a report that concluded that USAID's management and oversight over HIID had been "lax." In May 1997 [Jonathan] Hay [HIID's general director in Moscow] and [Andrei] Shleifer [director of HIID's Russia project], who had played a huge role in U.S. policy to Russia, were fired by HIID when USAID revoked nearly $14 million of its commitments to HIID amid allegations that they had "abused the trust of the United States Government by using personal relationships . . . for private gain."

—Janine R. Wedel, *Collision and Collusion: The Strange Case of Western Aid to Eastern Europe 1989-1998*

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Britain's Atlantic Option

And America's Stake

Conrad Black

NINETY YEARS AGO, Lord Curzon—an intellectual grandee and holder of high offices, including viceroy of India and foreign secretary—opined that, without its empire,

> England from having been the arbiter will sink at best into the inglorious playground of the world. Our antiquities, our natural beauties, our mansion houses and parks will attract a crowd of wandering pilgrims. People will come to see us just as they climbed the Acropolis at Athens or ascend the waters of the Nile. England will become a sort of glorified Belgium.

This, it has turned out, was unduly pessimistic. While the Empire is all but gone, Britain remains one of the eight or so countries, grouped in the second rank behind the United States, that retain some world role. The United Kingdom's status in the world owes less to its nuclear weapons and permanent seat at the UN Security Council than to its prosperity on the edge of Europe, and its central historical and cultural position in the English-speaking world which it founded. In an international political universe of some 180 countries, Britain's status is not an unenviable one, and from this platform of deserved respect it is possible to envision several alternative courses for Britain's future.

At any rate, it should be possible. But the discussion of the British future today evidences almost no hint of open horizons. Instead, the British national imagination is staggering in a sludge of inevitability about a progressively tighter European Union. While there is virtually no enthusiasm in Britain for plunging deeper into such a Union—all the polls show a profound disenchantment with the Brussels bureaucracy, a deep reticence about monetary union, and growing skepticism about the economic implications of a British future in Europe—the general sense is that it will happen anyway.

The Blair government is both a microcosm of this state of affairs and a contributor to it. It has kept Britain away from the euro for the time being, yet its body language suggests grudging accession in a few years—unless, of course, catastrophe overtakes the experiment in the meantime. It is not entirely clear whether the Blair government's reluctance to embrace the Union reflects real doubts about its viability and logic, or about whether entry would best serve Britain's interests, or, again, whether it is merely that political expediency has suggested a slow approach to an accepted end. Whatever the motives, the resulting uncertainty is demoralizing.

Advocates of immediate entry into the European Monetary Union certainly exist in

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Britain. But while a grandiose vision of a united Europe is the chief argument for Eurofederalism bandied about in continental Europe, in Britain the federalists, apart from a few people in transactional financial businesses, are reduced to a fatalistic advocacy that Britain should be part of a tight European union—one culminating in federation—if only because staying out may be more harmful than going in. The truth is that many in Britain fear isolation, and, with it, marginalization. Without an empire, there is a widespread view that the country must associate with some larger group, and Europe appears to most to be the only such group at hand.

What seems to have been forgotten at least until recently is that, unlike any other European country, the United Kingdom has both an Atlantic and European vocation. Europe and North America are both plausible associations for the British, the latter much superior to the former in many ways. Unfortunately, Britain's North American alternative is underdeveloped in public discourse. It is the main purpose of this essay to unfurl its logic, which, it turns out, is a wholesome one not only for Great Britain, but also for the United States and Canada.

The Ambivalence of Britain

BRITAIN COPED with the loss of empire with more dignity than other great imperial powers. But the country is still afflicted by an existential loneliness, dating at least from the Suez fiasco of 1956, and the history of Britain's ambivalent association with the European project reflects that loneliness.

Less than a year after the Suez crisis, the Treaty of Rome was signed. The final loss of what had become the imperial illusion thus dovetailed almost perfectly with the rise of the European integration project. The four decades that followed were marked by British uncertainty and inconsistency toward Europe. Harold Macmillan, prime minister from 1957 to 1963, tried to combine a special closeness to the United States (affecting to play the sage Greek to Kennedy's Roman) with membership in the Common Market—only to be harshly rejected by de Gaulle, who found such a combination unacceptable and vetoed Britain's Common Market application in 1962. Harold Wilson was initially Euroskeptical (1964-70), then cautiously pro-European in his second term (1974-76), but always ambiguous and evasive. There was nothing ambiguous about the nearly pathologically anti-American Edward Heath (1970-74), who did his best to deconstruct almost any relationship with the United States. One of nature's corporatists, while advocating a modest common market he strove to promote practically unlimited European supra-nationalism—but he could bring neither his party nor his countrymen along with him to any appreciable degree.

Margaret Thatcher (1979-90) rebuilt the American relationship, demonstrated that Britain could influence U.S. policy making, and showed that Britain retained autonomous moral authority in the world. Toward Europe she was less consistent. She was one of the instigators of the Single European Act, which required some surrender of sovereignty on the part of the members, and under cabinet pressure took Britain into the Exchange Rate Mechanism, fixing the relationship between members' currencies. Then she declared her implacable opposition to a more supranational Europe. John Major (1990-97) started out believing Europe could be placated with gestures stopping well short of integration, but discovered otherwise. (The revival of British prosperity began when Britain fell out of the Exchange Rate Mechanism in 1992.)

Tony Blair's ambivalence, already noted, is almost impenetrable and rather illogical, especially for a new leader with an impregnable position in Parliament and the polls. Mr. Blair has said he will pool sovereignty without surrendering it and will be governed by the British national interest in monetary union and other euro questions. This would suggest that choices are available. But to say so outright would not be compatible with the

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basic argument propounded by British Eurofederalists—with whom Blair and his party are closely associated—that Euro-integration is inexorable and Britain should get in step with the ineluctable forces of history if it wants to exercise any influence in Europe. Blair is right: he not only has a choice, but he will have to make it sooner or later. Unfortunately, like most of his countrymen, he seems to have an impoverished notion of the alternatives.

Two Political Cultures

DURING MOST of the period just outlined, British public interest in the European question was tepid. Certainly, the 1975 referendum on whether to leave or remain in the Common Market produced a burst of furious debate, but for ten to fifteen years after that there was a kind of intellectual demobilization. It was only as the Common Market became the Community, and the Community finally became the Union, that unease grew rapidly at the spectacle of a Britain increasingly isolated and often outvoted eleven to one. That uneasiness grew further when evidence accumulated that Jacques Delors' soothing notions of subsidiarity within the Union—essentially the promise that local matters would still be decided close to their point of origin, by local and not central EU authorities—was simply a scam. Increasingly, polls indicated that the British public was becoming disillusioned with the endless cascade of authoritarian directives from Brussels, which, in the interests of "harmonization", sought to regulate even the most obscure aspects of British life, from the stacking of fruit in supermarkets to seasons for bird-shooting in the northern counties. By now, almost all polls show that 70 percent of the people oppose any further move into Europe, and that a significant minority would be happy to depart Europe politically altogether, while keeping the free-trade arrangements.

The British consistently support the Common Market's free movement of goods and people, and few want to give up such a common sense advantage. But increasingly there is resentment that it has been encumbered with all sorts of unwanted economic policy costs and dangers. Recently, these dangers have been highlighted by remarks from the new German finance minister and governing party chairman, Oskar Lafontaine, calling for Britain to accept higher tax rates, greater social spending and an increased EU annual membership fee; and from the German foreign minister, Joschka Fischer, calling for an end to individual country vetoes and a majority voting system in which Britain would be swamped. Even more recently, the revelation by the normally docile EU Court of Auditors that $5 billion annually is squandered by the European Commission in fraudulent or grossly wasteful spending has further shaken the federalists.

The problems transcend economics. The prevailing British view is that British political institutions, which have served the country well for centuries, should not be stripped jurisdictionally to clothe Brussels and Strasbourg, which are unaccountable and authoritarian by Anglo-Saxon standards; that Britain should not go back to the pre-Thatcher European levels of taxation and industrial strife; and that Britain should not slam the door on its relationships with the United States and Canada. These relationships (along with the geographical fact of the English Channel) have been Britain's greatest strategic asset in this century, and the British are understandably reluctant to dismantle them. So for that matter are the Canadians—and so too should be the Americans.

But the logic of the Atlantic connection does not come solely from strategic considerations. It is also grounded in political culture. The French and Germans, for well-known historic reasons, have social safety nets that have effectively become hammocks. Out of fear of the role of discontented mobs in their history, a role that has no real parallel in the history of the English-speaking countries, France and Germany have tax and benefit sys-

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tems which, at least by Anglo-American standards, subsidize unemployment and destroy the incentive to work. By British and North American standards they have semi-dysfunctional dirigist economies, with excessive levels of taxation and unemployment, largely because they are paying huge quantities of Danegeld to the urban masses and uneconomic small farmers. Their political traditions are corporatist not liberal, arising in the case of France from such illustrious but thoroughly authoritarian figures as Richelieu, Colbert, Napoleon and de Gaulle.

As for Germany, it is a cliché to say that it was unified too late, had great difficulty determining whether it was an eastern or western-facing nation, and that whenever it set out to assure its own security it ended up making its neighbors insecure. Clichés aside, while Germany is now well unified in accepted borders, and while the extension of NATO to Poland will have the highly desirable effect that the eastern border of the Western world is not also a German border, that country still projects its own sense of historical loneliness. It is possible, and feared by some, that the German desire for security could cause it to exert pressure on other countries to immerse themselves more completely in Europe than many of their citizens, including a strong current majority of the British, find comfortable.

In sharp contrast to Britain and the United States, none of the largest continental European countries has durably effective political institutions. Those of Germany date from 1949; France's from 1958; Spain's from 1975. The Italians are still trying to reform their constitution. It is understandable that countries so placed might feel that they are not giving up much in institutional terms by moving toward federation. Indeed, some favor federation as a way of bypassing national institutions that have become sclerotic, ineffectual and politically immobile. Most British, for good reason, do not.

The British electorate's instincts against political immersion in Europe are sensible, but to turn away from Europe altogether to embrace Britain's post-imperial solitude is to court Curzon's curse. So both the Major and Blair governments have temporized at a fundamental level, suggesting that Britain can be a political contortionist: "at the heart of Europe", at the side of the United States, and at the head of the Commonwealth, all at the same time. Both Euro-integrationists and ambivalent dissemblers of both major parties imply that Britain can cede sovereignty without surrendering it, build up Brussels and Strasbourg without reducing Westminster—in short, have its cake and eat it too.

This is the illogic of the present position of the British government, and the only way to resolve it is to imagine that there could be a multi-speed or variable geometry Europe—in other words, a European Union flexible enough to negotiate singular relationships with a variety of its members. That, however, is not the emerging pattern either in Brussels or Strasbourg; that pattern is one of imposed uniformity, not of variety and flexibility to accommodate individual needs. To date, so-called opt-outs have been shown to be of limited value, and in all probability any further ones would only once again delay Britain's reckoning with Europe.

The Atlantic Option

IT SHOULD BE clear by now that Britain's options are not limited to embracing the European Union or settling for loneliness. Others are available. One is for Britain to join the European Economic Area (EEA) with Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. EEA membership would maintain Britain's full access to the single market, avoid further political integration, and save most of the present financial cost of the EU. Then there is the Swiss option—embracing the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) but not the EEA. This would give almost as good an access to the EU market, but would allow only free movement of goods, not of people. It would also impose delays on British citizens travelling to EU countries. Even the most ardent

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Euroskeptic would not regard that as progress. Britain could in any case use the existence of its veto right and its large current account deficit with the EU to negotiate complete reciprocal access of goods and people, withdrawal from the political and judicial institutions, thus emancipating itself from the herniating mass of authoritarian Euro-directives with which it has been deluged—now totaling over 230,000 pages of mind-numbing regulations.

I have listed these options for the sake of completeness, but none of them is commensurate with the scale of Britain's problem—which is to find for itself a place in the world that is appropriate to its history, its political culture, its economic interest and its strategic needs. The alternatives listed either embrace isolation or simply associate Britain with other relatively isolated countries. There is another option, however, that does meet the test of proportionality, and that builds from long-standing strategic and economic realities—and that is the Atlantic option.

As to economic reality, Britain is already deeply enmeshed commercially with the United States and Canada. In percentage terms, Britain trades almost twice as much with North America as do the other EU countries as a group. At the same time, Britain's share of trade with the EU has actually declined recently. If exports shipped on to non-EU destinations through Rotterdam and other European ports are included, together with overseas investment earnings, the EU's share of British exports is probably about 40 percent—which amounts to less than 10 percent of the United Kingdom's GDP. Conversely, the exports of a number of countries to the EU, including those of the United States, have risen considerably more rapidly than have Britain's in recent years, showing that EU membership is not entirely necessary for access to the European market. Over the last ten years, direct net investment in the United Kingdom from the United States and Canada has been one and a half times the corresponding figure for EU investment in Great Britain. As well, U.K. net direct investment in North America has been more than double its investment in the EU. These trends are continuing, impervious to EU preferences.

Now that the World Trade Organization is administering the Uruguay Round of trade liberalization agreements, the EU's common external tariff has fallen from 5.7 percent to 3.6 percent. This should not constitute a prohibitive barrier even to a Britain that was not in the EU, given its more bearable social costs and provided it retained control of its own currency. The fear of being frozen out of Europe by vindictive community bureaucrats is now, I believe, a complete fraud, though one would not know it to listen to the alarmist comments of many of Britain's political leaders and much of its media.

Indeed, the facts suggest that it is rather the other way around. The annual cost of Britain's adherence to the EU is nearly £10 billion in gross budgetary contributions. While almost half of this is returned in EU spending, it is spent, as former Chancellor of the Exchequer Norman Lamont has pointed out, "on things which the U.K. government would not choose to spend money on." Higher food prices in the U.K. because of the Common Agricultural Policy cost Britain rather more than £6 billion annually, though again about half of that is rebated directly to British farmers. The overall cost of the EU to Britain then is between £8 and £12 billion, or around 1.5 percent of GDP. There are in addition the significant costs imposed by EU regulation, and the heavy political price of eroding sovereignty—which includes the tacit encouragement of provincial separatism, as Scottish and Welsh nationalists envision receiving the sort of direct grants enjoyed by Ireland.

Despite these costs, and the £3 billion annual trade deficit the U.K. runs with the EU, there are still those who deflect such unpleasantries with the noble hope that Britain will ultimately Thatcherize Europe rather than be de-Thatcherized by it. The truth is, however, that the United Kingdom could now probably assert a stronger and

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more positive influence on the European Union from outside than it could by going further into it. Free from its costs and interferences, Britain could export successfully into it, thus demonstrating the superior competitiveness of the so-called Anglo-Saxon model. For since the Uruguay Round, attempts by the EU to limit imports from non-members can only be sustained if they are unanimously upheld by multi-national trade panels, which is very unlikely.

As a consequence of all this, it would be logical for Britain to negotiate entry into NAFTA, which will probably be renamed and which is already negotiating with the European Economic Area and European Free Trade Association, as well as with Chile. Such an expanding NAFTA would have every commercial advantage over the EU. It is based on the Anglo-American free-market model of relatively restrained taxation and social spending, which is the principal reason why, over the last fifteen years, the United States and Canada together have created a net average of two million more new jobs per year than have the countries of the European Union. NAFTA, as its name implies, is a free-trade area only. The United States will not make any significant concessions of sovereignty and does not expect other countries to do so. A trading bloc based on NAFTA and the more advanced South American countries could also expand into eastern Europe faster than the EU. Such a bloc, after all, would not be encumbered by such impediments as the EU's Common Agricultural Policy, and its powerful urge to protect onerous French and German social costs.

There is no need to repeat here the nature of the Anglo-American special relationship, which is both broad and deep, historical and contemporary. It is enough to point out that none of the continental European countries has a particular affinity with the United States and Canada, or anything remotely comparable to Britain's dramatic modern historic intimacy with North America.

Beyond that, an even closer British association with North America could serve a broader, and very European, purpose. The British public's fear of loss of jurisdiction and socialist backsliding in a federal Europe is well founded—and Britain, by staying outside, could be the example that might prevent the EU as a whole from smothering all its fully subscribing members with centralized Euro-socialism.

When the possibility of an Atlantic option for Britain is broached, the cry goes up in British Eurofederalist circles that the United Kingdom would be dominated by the United States. The words "fifty-first state" are often uttered derisively, even though any such association would be a loose one—and as if there were not a much greater danger of Britain being intruded upon by the Europeans. In fact, Britain's sovereignty would be in much better condition than it now is. Canada, whose distinctiveness from the northern American states is fairly tenuous apart from Quebec, has lost no additional sovereignty after entering into the free-trade agreement, even though over 40 percent of Canada's GNP is derived from trade with the United States—more than four times the percentage of British GNP taken up by trade with the EU. More important, Canada suffers none of the jurisdictional intrusions that are routine in the British slouch to Eurofederalism.

The Lights Go On in Washington

ONE OF THE REASONS so few Britons think in terms of an Atlantic option is that few people in the United States or Canada encourage them to do so. True, the leaders of the opposition in Canada last year urged a NAFTA invitation for Britain, but just as the British are stuck in some unhelpful intellectual patterns, so too are many Americans.

The United States has been a supporter of an "ever closer European Union", to use the parlance of the European treaties, since the Truman administration. The initial motivation for such a policy was clear: by promoting European cooperation and integration, the United States hoped to contain the Soviet threat and avoid having to intervene a third

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time in a European war. If European strategic unity as represented by NATO was good, then so must be its economic—and ultimately political—unity. The American conception of European integration was thus of a piece with that of its European founders and promoters, a parallel thought natural among allies joined together in the contest with Moscow. Indeed, as that contest endured, grew more intense, and spread throughout the world in the late 1950s and 1960s, U.S. enthusiasm for European cooperation and eventually the European Common Market and Community steadily increased. With it went an urge to propel Britain into Europe, essentially to strengthen West European backbones as Cold War allies.

Over the years, the practice of America pushing Britain toward Europe continued, and it has not been abandoned since the end of the Cold War. This is partly out of habit and understandable intellectual inertia. It may be, too, that the present U.S. administration has felt, rightly, that Britain would be a force for good government in Europe. With the Continentals mired in a bureaucratically induced slog of low-growth, high unemployment economics, it makes at least superficial sense to hope that post-Thatcherite Britain could teach them something about basic economic arithmetic, without the stigma of being importers of American capitalism. Tony Blair has hinted at this: a British Euro-capitalism.

In all of this, no argument offered by Americans or other foreigners on behalf of full British integration with Europe has had much to do with *British* national interests. And the least the U.S. government should do is stop trying to push Britain in a direction in which the British people show little inclination to go.

HAPPILY, there is some evidence that more discerning Americans are now having second thoughts about the course Europe is pursuing. Prominent administration officials such as the Deputy Treasury Secretary Larry Summers have cautioned against the dangers of bringing in EMU without accompanying structural labor market and long-term fiscal reforms. The American experience put political union ahead of economic union, and many Americans—including senior legislators and members of the current administration—have indicated their belief that trying to do things in reverse order is hazardous.

At the same time, some senior American foreign policy experts are becoming concerned about the likely influence of a centralized Europe—or of a failed attempt at a centralized Europe—on the Western alliance and on the conduct of U.S. strategic policy. Europe's shabby and dangerous mistreatment of Turkey, the Middle East's most important country—in which the leading European powers cravenly hide behind the Greeks—is a case in point, and a warning of the kind of behavior that might characterize the new Europe. (It is, it should be noted, in stark contrast to the much more enlightened U.S. and Canadian treatment of Mexico.)

Europe could become an American problem at an even deeper level. Martin Feldstein and others have expressed concern that the attempt to manage a monetary union and the subsequent development of a political union could lead to increased conflicts both within Europe and between Europe and the United States. Henry Kissinger has suggested that the tensions inherent in the EMU gamble hold the potential for a stampede to the extremes of Left and Right, leading to the very instability that successive administrations have sought to prevent. Even if Europe succeeds in placing the cart of monetary union before the horse of a single labor and housing market, without sufficiently coherent political control—and there is little of that commodity currently evident—there is no reason to suppose that a united Europe would necessarily be more willing to share the burdens of global leadership.

Of course, it is conceivable that France and Germany, acting together, could rediscover a vocation for enlightened international policy making, but on recent form it would be imprudent to count on it. Kissinger and others are surely right to say that it is much more likely that the energies of those countries

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would be spent emancipating themselves from the leadership of the United States, dismantling history's most successful alliance system, and possibly engaging in aggressive competition with Washington for global leadership. For no one, and certainly no American, should underestimate the extent to which Eurofederalism is inspired by a resentment of the power and success of the United States—and, as some would have it, the "Anglo-Saxons"—over the last fifty years.

The European concern to "stand up" to America has undistinguished cultural and political antecedents. It figured prominently, for example, in the writings of Werner Daitz, the head of the Third Reich's Central Research Institute for National Economic Order and Large Area Economics, and of Vichyite apologists such as Drieu La Rochelle and Francis Delaisi. Obviously, current Euro-integrationists draw no inspiration from such distasteful precedents, but these disreputable forms of anti-Americanism still lurk on the extremes of European politics and have the capacity to impinge on the center at times of tension and crisis. The main home for such sentiments remains France, where they are espoused by both pro- and anti-European forces—and, indeed, sometimes expressed at the very top. Thus, Georges-Marc Benamou in *Le Dernier Mitterrand* quotes the late French president as having said in his latter years:

> France does not know it, but we are at war with America. Yes, a permanent war, a vital war, an economic war, a war without death. Yes, they are very hard the Americans, they are voracious, they want undivided power over the world.

And at the EU summit in November 1995 in Madrid, President Chirac, himself ostensibly a conservative, extolled the alleged victory of "European values" over the ideology of world conservatism (led by the United States). The unhelpful, not to say neurotic, French response to the pre-eminence of the United States in the world is well illustrated by recent French antics in respect of Iraq.

Such attitudes are not peculiar to France, even if they are strongest there. In Germany, even the staunchly pro-American former Chancellor Kohl stated in a speech in Louvain in 1996 that he conceived of a world of three blocs: the United States, the Far East and the EU, and went on to urge that Europe should "assert itself" against the other two. His successors are unlikely to be friendlier or more enlightened.

And then there is Britain itself. Virtually the only political groups that speak with any enthusiasm of Eurofederalism in Britain today are the odd couple consisting of the old Left and the anti-American wing of the Tories. The detritus of the old Labour Party looks to Europe to re-impose on Britain pre-Thatcher levels of social spending, taxation and union-dominated industrial relations. The anti-American Tories are an unlikely mélange of Heathite corporatists, nostalgic imperialists and those affecting a pseudo-aristocratic disdain for American "vulgarity." (For a recent and egregious example of the last of these, see Ian Gilmour in the *London Review of Books*, December 10, 1998. Lord Gilmour goes out of his way to express hostility to the views I expound in this essay.)

What European Foreign Policy?

WITH OR without Britain (but especially with it), EU foreign policy can have four possible consequences for the United States.

The first is that the EU will assume its fair share in defending liberal world order, sometimes in disagreement with the nuances of American policy, but basically acting in partnership with it. Unfortunately, this is the least likely option, not only for the ideological and political reasons outlined above, but because the European nations are cutting their defense budgets and steadily becoming less competitive arms manufacturers. For them, force is not so much an option of last resort as no option at all.

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Second, EU foreign and security policy could be simply ineffectual because the decision-making process will require an approach based upon the lowest common denominator. It would be virtually impossible to achieve a consensus to do anything significant on current form.

Third, it could be ineffectual in terms of its impact on a given situation while also being obstructive of effective American responses—as in the Middle East, or in targeting weapons of mass destruction or combating rogue regimes. Thus, the EU would send the Irans, Iraqs and Libyas of the world the message that they may continue to resist the Americans with impunity, because the more emollient and commercially-minded EU will always give them a way out.

The fourth possibility is that Europe will successfully come together and form an entity—Chancellor Kohl's third bloc—that seeks gradually to challenge and diminish American influence on the Continent and elsewhere. This, certainly, is the undisguised ambition of the French.

Britain relates vitally to these four possibilities. Britain is at the center, geographically, culturally and politically, of an Atlantic community, whereas it is in all respects on the periphery of an exclusively or predominantly European order. Despite the British government's sincere attachment to NATO, the unintended consequence of a Britain ever more closely integrated into a European foreign and defense policy would be a Britain torn away from its natural Atlanticist vocation.

Consider, too, the implications for the United States. If a fully fledged common foreign and security policy, with majority voting, had been operating at the time of the Gulf War in 1990-91, it is certain beyond any doubt that the majority of EU nations would have voted against military action, and Britain could then not have acted in concert with the United States. Nor could Britain have bucked the inclinations of its European partners and allowed the Americans to bomb Libya from British bases in April 1986. Nor, again, could Britain have launched its own Falklands campaign.

At the start of the Yugoslav crisis in 1991, the then president of the European Council, Jacques Poos, declared, "This is the hour of Europe. If one problem can be solved by the Europeans, it is the Yugoslav problem. This is a European country and it is not up to the Americans." What ensued is notorious, but only an eventual American military and diplomatic presence secured any progress at all.

The Potential of NAFTA

UNLIKE OTHER EU countries, Britain has a choice. It has a common Atlantic home. If Europe realized this it would either make Eurofederalism a more comfortable prospect for Britain, or, by not doing so, demonstrate conclusively just how uncomfortable Eurofederalism could be for the British. If it were to choose the first course, such shameful and punitive abuses of Britain's minority position as the overly broad and prolonged European embargo on British beef would not recur. In either case, the British government and people would be in a much better position to make an informed decision than they are now. Britain is now proceeding one unsteady step at a time, with no sense of its real destination and little serious public analysis of consequences or alternatives.

The United States is better placed than any country—even Britain itself—to halt this dismal progress. It is time Washington reassessed its view of Britain and Europe, for ultimately the issue is more important than almost anything that currently preoccupies it. If post-Thatcher Britain has been trying to "muddle through" the European question, it has at least been aware of some potential dangers of Euro-integration, and the British public has been commendably resistant to premature Euro-euphoria. There is no evidence, however, that any recent U.S. administration has thought these questions through—either with respect to the European Union itself or Britain's putative role in it. As to the latter, if Europe integrates successfully and continues to be a reliable and constructive independent

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ally, it will not be because Britain has tipped the intra-European scales in a sensible direction. Britain has only about 15 percent of Europe's population and economy, and is very much the odd man out in terms of its attitudes and perspectives. Europe will or will not cohere and behave with maturity. Britain will be an influence but nothing like a determining one. Britain could, however, be decisive in assuring that an American-led bloc had a wide margin of superior strength over an integrated European rival.

Still—and contrary to widespread Euro-integrationist feeling, including the American variety—Britain will have more influence with Europe by being reasonably independent of it and not subsumed into it; by maintaining its much maligned, much envied, imprecise, but certainly special, relationship with the United States and Canada. The course suggested here—continuation of British membership of Common Market; non-membership of the European political and juridical union; becoming part of the expanding North American Free Trade Area—would give the United Kingdom greater access to markets than any other country in the world enjoys. It would be the antithesis of "little England." Britain would preserve all its options to associate more closely with Europe if it wished. The British national interest would be best served by such a course.

If, that is, it is available. That availability is up to the United States to decide. U.S. influence in Europe does not depend on its use of Britain as a Trojan horse, even if either country intended Britain to play that role. Obviously, the United States should not take any initiatives that could be construed as anti-European. But it would be appropriate, and certainly not premature, to support Canadian efforts to broaden NAFTA, and not just to the stabler countries of Latin America, the Norwegians and the Swiss. The Poles, Czechs, Hungarians and Turks—who, because of the structure of transfer payments in the EU (and other complexities in the case of Turkey), are going to have a very long, possibly interminable, wait for EU membership—should be brought into a renamed NAFTA as quickly as possible. All are or will be in NATO. They must be secured in the Western world, and the European Unionists, hobbled by protectionist socialism, cannot be relied upon to achieve that end.

And Britain—still one of the world's eight or so most important countries after the United States—remains America's truest, most important ally. It would not be provocative to offer Britain an associate status in NAFTA. And it would certainly not serve legitimate American interests to have Britain, for lack of any alternative, either subsumed into a Europe for which the Anglo-Americans have generous but uncertain hopes—or succumb at last to Curzon's curse. □

History Has its Purposes

Mr. Blair, I think, is not interested in history. Sometimes he seems eager to wind up our history, which for the last 300 years has offered a constructive alternative to European centralisation of power. The Union with Scotland, which he is also dismantling, was part of the same settlement as our parliamentary constitution. The implications of both changes are far more serious than he seems to recognise. The form of a new House of Lords will create constitutional problems far beyond that of its own composition. Seen from the Continent, our (more durable) institutions may seem irrational, but, as Tocqueville wrote, they may well have some connection with our greater liberties. Oliver Cromwell once said that 'it was necessary to pull down this government, and it would be time enough then to consider what should be placed in the room of it'. Mr. Blair might consider what happened to his well-meant reforms—which included a new House of Lords.

—Hugh Trevor-Roper, "Prime Minister Without a Past", *The Spectator* (London), December 19/26, 1998

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Mayday for Oslo

Joel Singer

ON ONE LEVEL the 1993 Oslo Agreement between Israel and the Palestinians involved a general commitment by both parties to resolve their dispute through negotiation and compromise rather than violence. On another level the Oslo Agreement—now, with its various supplements and implementing agreements, better understood as the Oslo process—involved a very specific set of mutual commitments and reciprocal obligations, the core of which was the old bargain of land for peace and security. Because the two sides were so far apart on the most difficult issues—Jerusalem, borders, refugees—they decided on a two-stage process: first a five-year "interim" period in which trust would build and the Palestinians would gain increasing autonomy and de facto control over the West Bank and Gaza, then negotiations over the difficult "final status" issues.

In recent months, PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat has been threatening to make a unilateral declaration of Palestinian statehood (UDI) when the interim period ends, and Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu has responded by saying that any such declaration would scuttle the peace process for good and trigger Israeli countermeasures, including the annexation of parts of the West Bank and Gaza. To make matters worse, hotly contested Israeli elections are now scheduled for May 17, two weeks after the deadline, thus hardening everyone's positions and bringing hard-nosed electoral calculations to the fore on all sides.

As so often happens in the Middle East, however, the situation is even more complicated than it seems and actually resembles nothing so much as a high-stakes game of chicken. For despite his threats Arafat probably does not want to declare statehood unilaterally. He would prefer the Oslo process to continue forward as before, and is using bluster to gain leverage in negotiations and boost his popularity among Palestinian hardliners. Netanyahu, meanwhile, might well find a unilateral declaration of Palestinian statehood attractive, because it would freeze the peace process in place and make future Israeli concessions unnecessary while putting the blame on Arafat's shoulders.

If not handled skillfully and sensitively, the looming deadline for the conclusion of the final status negotiations—May 4, 1999 (or the end of 1999 if Arafat accepts the advice to postpone the UDI until after the Israeli elections)—could well represent the end rather than the beginning of hopes for a lasting settlement. Unless the United States steps in soon with a major diplomatic initiative, the Middle East peace process might collapse. This would be a disaster, and an unnecessary one at that. For the solution to this present

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dilemma, if not the larger ones behind it, is clear: the United States should encourage both parties to accept a limited extension of the interim period and use the time to see that the future of the peace process is decided by the true interests of both sides, rather than by old calendar markings that have long since been overtaken by events.

From Camp David to Oslo

THE OSLO Agreements' concept of a five-year interim period of autonomy was copied from the 1978 Camp David Agreement. Back then Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin had wanted autonomy to be the permanent solution for the West Bank and Gaza, but President Jimmy Carter convinced him to agree to a two-stage process. Begin accepted Carter's modification only because he believed that at the end of the five-year interim period, the parties would not be able to reach an agreement on permanent status, and as a result autonomy would be perpetuated by default. To prevent autonomy from effectively being transformed into a state-like entity, Begin also insisted on shaping it as a personal, rather than territorial, autonomy (that is to say, applying only to the Palestinians but not to the West Bank and Gaza territory). In the same vein, he opposed granting the Palestinians powers that could be interpreted as attributes of sovereignty, such as legislative powers and the authority to issue passports and stamps.

The Palestinians rejected the Camp David Agreement precisely for these reasons; they refused to enter into a process that would not guarantee statehood, if not immediately, at least at the end of the process. In the 1993 Oslo Agreement, however, Arafat accepted this very same formula, taking a calculated risk that, regardless of what this agreement said, the reality created on the ground would eventually lead to a Palestinian state. Arafat did not even request that the Oslo Agreements recognize a Palestinian right of self-determination, hencetofore the most basic Palestinian demand. Rather than insisting on this slogan, which would have foiled the agreement, he pragmatically opted for quickly obtaining a foothold on the ground. He also trusted Israel's Labor government of 1993 to be more receptive to Palestinian statehood than the Likud government of 1978.

Indeed, the Labor government under Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres agreed to grant the Palestinians autonomy powers much larger in scope than those envisioned by Begin. They agreed to provide the Palestinians with legislative powers, passports, stamps and an international airport. More importantly, Arafat was given responsibility for security, exercised through an army-like police force, over an increasing portion of the West Bank and Gaza. More than anything else, the Palestinian security authority turned the autonomy into a territorial autonomy, which made it distinguishable from statehood only in name. At this point there is growing support among the Israeli Left for the idea of an independent Palestinian state and a realization on the part of the Israeli Right, including the Netanyahu government, that such a result, even if it is not warranted, is inevitable. Yet while a majority of Israelis would accept a Palestinian state at the end of the process, there is unanimity across the Israeli political spectrum opposing UDI or the termination of the Oslo Agreements—and with good reason.

The Legal Considerations

IN TALKING of the Oslo process one must differentiate between two components. The first consists of the fundamental agreement taken by Israel and the PLO to resolve their differences and achieve permanent reconciliation through negotiations rather than through unilateral actions. This concept was enshrined in the exchange of letters between Arafat and Rabin on September 10, 1993, known as the Mutual Recognition Agreement, and in the Declaration of Principles signed on September 13, 1993. It was intended to be permanent and not subject to any specific timetable.

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The second component is time-sensitive. It consists of a series of implementing accords, including the Cairo Agreement (May 1994), the Oslo II Agreement (September 1995), the Hebron Protocol (January 1997) and the recently completed Wye Memorandum (September 1998). These were parts of an autonomy period that was scheduled to last until May 4, 1999 (the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Cairo Agreement). By this time, a permanent status agreement was to be completed. But the "Oslo process" itself does not expire on that date. When Arafat threatens a UDI, he obfuscates the fundamental distinction between the two aspects of the Oslo process. The fact that the five-year period of autonomy might conclude in May 1999 without a permanent status agreement does not mean that the open-ended agenda established in the historic White House lawn handshake between Arafat and Rabin for negotiating a permanent settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute also expires. Furthermore, in Section 31(7) of the Oslo II Agreement, both parties undertook not to change unilaterally the status of the West Bank and Gaza even after the end of the interim period, "pending the outcome of the permanent status negotiations"; in other words, until a permanent status agreement is reached.

A unilateral Palestinian declaration of statehood would change the West Bank and Gaza's status and thus constitute a flagrant violation of the Oslo Agreements. This would indeed, as the Israelis argue, entitle Israel to take countermeasures such as the annexation to Israel of parts of the West Bank and Gaza.

Since it is difficult for Arafat to make a convincing legal case for UDI within the Oslo framework, he might justify such a course in a different way, as a rejection of the process and its earlier agreements. But even this action would not validate a unilateral Palestinian declaration of independence. One of the recognized conditions for establishing a state is freedom from foreign control, but Israel clearly continues to exercise control over the entire West Bank and Gaza. The Oslo Agreements recognize Israel's supreme authority over these areas, even in those parts where local autonomy has been transferred in full to the Palestinians, such as in most of Gaza and the big cities of the West Bank. In fact, if Arafat terminates the Oslo Agreements, Israel can make a strong legal argument that, with the expiration of these agreements, the West Bank and Gaza's status would return to the status quo ante; in other words, all the authority currently exercised by the Palestinians should revert to Israel rather than being retained by the Palestinians, because the agreements transferred this authority for five years only.

Moreover, while Israel has long asserted a claim to sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza, it decided not to effectuate it unilaterally, but rather to negotiate the West Bank and Gaza's status with Jordan and Egypt, from which Israel conquered these areas. In Camp David, Egypt abstained from asserting any sovereignty claims over Gaza, but Israel committed to a negotiated solution to the West Bank and Gaza. In its Treaty of Peace with Israel, Jordan too did not require the return of the West Bank, leaving its future to be resolved between Israel and the Palestinians per the Oslo Agreements. In the Oslo Agreements, Israel renewed its commitment to a negotiated solution for the West Bank and Gaza and undertook not to change the West Bank and Gaza's status pending the conclusion of the permanent status negotiations. However, if the Palestinians themselves terminate the Oslo Agreements, Israel might effectuate its claim for sovereignty, free of any commitment to the contrary to Egypt, Jordan or the Palestinians.

The Palestinian drift toward a UDI therefore is inherently destabilizing. If the Palestinians were no longer bound by the prohibition against unilateral actions, neither would Israel be so constrained. And once the two parties feel free to take unilateral steps regarding the disposition of the West Bank and Gaza, chaos could soon follow. What, for instance, might happen if, in a few months,

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Arafat declares statehood and moves to apply Palestinian "sovereign authority" in the West Bank and Gaza, using his armed police force, while Israel moves to protect its interests by annexing the same territories and enforcing its laws with its soldiers? This is a recipe for disaster, as the U.S. government has recognized. In an interview given on January 16, 1999 to the London-based newspaper *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, President Clinton reiterated America's long-standing opposition to unilateral actions. He declared that the United States would oppose a UDI, stressing that "those who believe that they can declare unilateral positions or take unilateral acts when the interim period ends are courting disaster."

Arafat's and Netanyahu's Hidden Agendas

TO UNDERSTAND the situation fully, however, one must probe beneath the surface of each side's arguments. Arafat reads the Israeli political map very astutely. He recognizes that at the end of the process, a Palestinian state will be established. The real issue between Israel and the Palestinians is therefore not the establishment of a Palestinian state but rather its borders. Arafat's idea of threatening a UDI originated in his fears that even the most flexible Israeli position on borders will be short of his minimum requirements. His concern is that he would fall into a trap: either he agrees to Israel's unacceptable offer on borders or no permanent status agreement could be signed and autonomy would be perpetuated. In order to push Israel to a more flexible position, therefore, Arafat is playing the only card available to him. By threatening a UDI Arafat is attempting to turn the tables on Israel by creating a new default situation—the creation of a Palestinian state—if no permanent status agreement is reached. In fact, however, Arafat does not really want to see his threat materialize, because, among other reasons, he might end up with a mini-state comprised of non-contiguous enclaves. A UDI therefore may result in little more than the PLO's empty declaration of independence of 1988. However, it could give Israel the pretext to stop the Oslo process. At the same time, Arafat needs to insist on his threat in order not to lose credibility, both vis-à-vis Israel and internally; and politically, he cannot just let May 4, 1999 pass without anything happening. His extraordinary brinkmanship skills and the high expectations built up among Palestinians might fail him this time and force him to make a move that would work against his best interests.

Like Arafat, Netanyahu too is quite possibly playing a double game. Initially, Netanyahu accepted Oslo very reluctantly, and only because he realized that politically he would not be able to get rid of the agreements that he had inherited from the previous Labor government. Like Begin, his first preference is to see the autonomy arrangements remain in effect indefinitely. If Arafat insists on a UDI or his interpretation that the Oslo Agreements expire on May 4, 1999, Netanyahu would benefit from a windfall: he would be rid of the hated Oslo Agreements without any blame being attributed to him. In a way, this would be, for Netanyahu, the best outcome: retaining the majority of the West Bank land that is also vacant of Palestinians while getting rid of the smaller part of the West Bank where all the Palestinians live.

Netanyahu understands that a Palestinian state is inevitable. He also understands that he will have to concede much more territory to Palestinian sovereignty in a negotiated permanent status agreement than as a result of Arafat's UDI. This is because a UDI would be limited to only those parts of the West Bank and Gaza where Arafat has effective control, while Netanyahu would be justified in immediately annexing the rest of the West Bank and Gaza to Israel.

Regardless of whether Arafat declares independence on May 4, 1999, or whether he postpones the declaration for a few months, allowing the Oslo Agreements to expire without a substitute agreement, with or without a UDI, would leave a dangerous and volatile vacuum in the Israeli-Palestinian relationship.

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Without the continuation of the hundreds of laboriously negotiated and detailed Oslo arrangements on critical issues such as security, economic relations and water, and given the reality that now exists in the West Bank and Gaza where Israeli and Palestinian civilians and armed forces are completely commingled, misunderstandings will accumulate, causing Israeli-Palestinian relations to deteriorate and leading to confrontations and an inevitable armed conflict.

Neutralizing the Dangers

IN SUM, a negotiated settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli dispute is imperative and a continuation of the autonomy arrangements is a pre-condition to such a settlement. Yet neither Netanyahu nor Arafat is in a position to negotiate an extension of the interim period, let alone propose this idea to the other side. For Netanyahu, agreeing to an extension of the Oslo Agreements for a few months would mean that he has given up his claim that these agreements remain in force until superseded. If he is re-elected, he would face the same situation of a deadlock within a few months, but this time would not be able to argue that these agreements continue in force indefinitely. For Arafat, after promising his people statehood on May 4, 1999 for more than a year, he would find it difficult to postpone this date without any reciprocal Israeli concessions, which Netanyahu is not in a position to give in the pre-election period.

U.S. leadership is essential to defuse the looming confrontation between Israel and the Palestinians, and there is no time to waste. The United States should step forward to rescue the peace process by attempting to square the circle: to "extend" the autonomy for an additional period of time while allowing Netanyahu to stick to the position that the Oslo Agreements do not expire in May 1999 and Arafat to argue that he has not given up his right to a UDI at the end of the "extension." An American plan to allow the parties to pass May 1999 safely should thus aim for an agreement by both parties on an extension of the interim period of autonomy envisioned under Oslo, during which the Oslo Agreements would continue to apply. This extension period should be long enough to permit negotiations on a supplemental agreement after completion of the Israeli electoral process and brief enough to allow Arafat to accept it politically—perhaps six to nine months. After the Israeli elections, a new government, comprised of a different coalition of parties, may make an agreement possible. More importantly, the mere formation of such a new government may convince Arafat to abstain from a UDI.

The extension agreement should be narrowly focused. While each party has a long list of grievances against the other party, the United States must not allow either party to attach any conditions or use this occasion to add other issues to the agenda. Finally, after the Israeli elections the United States should work with both parties to complete the permanent status agreement with dispatch. In order to achieve this objective the United States should promote a negotiating environment in which neither a UDI nor permanent autonomy can be used by the parties as a threat to influence the outcome of the negotiations.

The quest for a lasting peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinians has always been a triumph of hope over experience. The Oslo Agreements represent the best hope for peacefully resolving the fifty-year Israeli-Palestinian dispute. It would be a blunder of historic magnitude if the parties let the many accomplishments of Oslo fritter away because of a fluke of scheduling. □

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International Law *vs.* the American Constitution—*Something's Got To Give*

Jeremy Rabkin

WHEN MAJOR programs of President Roosevelt's New Deal were blocked by the Supreme Court during the 1930s, Roosevelt insisted that the Court must learn to apply a more "modern" view of the Constitution. Soon enough, a reshaped Court did adopt a much more permissive approach and scholars who liked the result spoke of a "living Constitution." We heard more about "evolving standards" and a "living Constitution" from defenders of judicial activism in the 1960s and 1970s. It seemed to offer the prestige of a higher law without the inconvenience of a fixed law. But sometimes we really want a constitution to have fixed and reliable limits. So, for example, many of those who once praised the "living Constitution" have, in recent months, invoked with great solemnity the "law" of impeachment, which, they say, was "fixed" by the Framers of the Constitution in the eighteenth century.

If nothing else, America's months of debate about impeachment remind us that many Americans care deeply about "the rule of law"—and disagree among themselves on what it means. Even those most devoted to defending President Clinton have appealed to arcane legal arguments about the proper application of the Constitution's provisions on impeachment.

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But our own law may not be the only law that determines what happens in this country. At the very moment when Americans were so preoccupied with debates about the meaning of perjury or the requirements for impeachment, a series of events around the world offered a foretaste of what may become the next subject of heated legal debate for the United States: the proper reach of international law.

In Britain, the House of Lords decided last December that Augusto Pinochet could be held for extradition to Spain, where a magistrate sought to try the former Chilean dictator for tortures and murders committed by the Chilean government during Pinochet's period as chief of state. Meanwhile, halfway around the world, the government of Australia struggled to defend itself before a UN authority, which condemned the Australian government for allowing a uranium mine to be developed in the vicinity of an Australian national park. And here in the United States, the U.S. Supreme Court, after repeated displays of its own impatience with judicial second-guessing of capital sentences, suddenly ordered a halt to an execution in Texas and agreed to hear an appeal claiming that capital punishment in this case would violate international standards.

All these cases reflect the deepening insinuation of international law into the internal affairs of sovereign states. More than that, they raise sharp questions about the status of this emerging body of law. No one of these

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episodes marks a historic turning point in itself, but they are all straws in the wind. Lots of things are now rustling in that wind and it is gaining in force. We used to think that the Constitution would serve as a windbreak, but that is no longer so clear. To gauge the extent of the challenge it is necessary to look briefly first at the theoretical assumptions on which our Constitution was grounded, and in light of which it used to be interpreted on matters of international law.

The Traditional American View and its Modern Rival

RESISTANCE to international impositions has a long history in American political and constitutional thinking. Indeed, the United States was founded on a particular understanding of the limited authority of an external law applied to American society. For the American Revolution was a rebellion against the imposition of transnational law, the precise issue being whether the British Parliament possessed the rightful authority to make laws for the internal affairs of the colonies. The colonists insisted that, as they had never been represented in the British Parliament, they could not accept such authority. The British disagreed, and so brought on a revolutionary conflict.

Thus, when the Declaration of Independence asserts the "self-evident" truth that all men are "endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights", it proceeds almost at once to the conclusion that governments "derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." The specific grievances against British rule, enumerated in the body of the Declaration, make it plain that "just powers" are those constrained by law, and law derives from the enactments of elected legislatures. In short, no legislature, no real law.

The argument of the American Founders was not a sentimental plea for "participation." The Declaration speaks of consent to the "just *powers*" of government, not to its every particular action. The point of emphasizing constraints of law and legislative consent is that government remains, at some level, unavoidably about coercion: one submits to lawful government in the understanding that everyone else will be bound by the same law.

Americans were ready to recognize that law requires force to make it effective. Only five years after the end of the Revolutionary War, they adopted a new Constitution precisely to assure more reliable force to American government. The argument for the new Constitution as opposed to the Articles of Confederation was that reliable common policies required a common government, with its own army, its own sources of revenue and its own powers to make and enforce laws. But the underlying point was the same as in the Revolution: such powers are acceptable only if placed under the ultimate control of a common legislature.

Since the world as a whole has no legislature, this view might seem to leave no place for any sort of international law. But that was not quite the view of the Founders. The Constitution provided that treaties adopted by the United States (along with federal statutes) would be "the supreme law of the land." But it also stipulated that Congress should have the power to "define and punish offences against the law of nations"; and James Madison, often called the "father of the Constitution", thought it worthwhile to publish a lengthy and quite scholarly disquisition on the "law of nations" when he served as secretary of state under President Jefferson.

The founding generation and its successors did not see this as a threat to government by consent. On the contrary, some sort of international understanding is actually required by the doctrine of government by consent, since such government can only be effective if outside powers refrain from interfering in it. The Declaration of Independence itself appeals to such common understandings when it asserts the right of American states, "as free and independent states . . . to levy war, conclude peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce and *to do all other Acts and*

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Things which Independent States may of right do" [emphasis added].

The "law of nations", as expounded in the leading European texts of that era, was focused on the relations of sovereign states, precisely with an eye to avoiding unnecessary affronts. It was concerned with such matters as security guarantees for diplomats and for neutral ships on the high seas. It was precisely to emphasize this focus of the "law of nations"—a law defining the way states deal with each other, and *not* how they govern at home—that Jeremy Bentham coined the term "inter-national law", just two years after the Framers convened in Philadelphia.

What made it seem plausible to speak of "international law" at the time of the American founding, and throughout the nineteenth century, was not only that this law was relatively undemanding, but that it was associated with a body of long-standing custom in inter-state dealings such that conformity with it could actually be expected of other states—or, if necessary, demanded. In the background to expectations of conformity was the assumption that the violation of clear rules was an invitation to retaliation, perhaps even by force—so that the law was not, after all, entirely removed from force. International law was seen as the law that sovereign states were willing to accept *and also to insist upon*. Whether or not it was really or fully "law", it rarely entered into national courts, because (apart from disputes about private property seized in naval conflicts on the high seas) it rarely concerned the rights of individuals.

IN THIS area, as elsewhere, America's founding doctrines seem to have exerted a lasting impression on subsequent American policy. The United States has generally held back from grand international schemes that might result in the imposition of international standards onto American domestic affairs. Most notably, the United States long refused to ratify international human rights conventions (along with labor standards proposed by the International Labor Organization). The Senate ratified a few human rights conventions in the past decade, but then only with severely limiting reservations, denying them any direct effect in domestic law. Critics have always complained that fuller participation would bind the United States to standards to which others would only pay lip service. In other words, for the critics these were not bona fide treaties at all but simply devices to shift fundamentally internal matters—how the American government deals with its own citizens—to international forums not directly accountable to the American people.

By now, this stance may seem less an expression of fundamental liberal principles than of particular American crochets, anachronistic survivals of eighteenth-century dogmas that make little sense even to other Western democracies. Certainly, the evolution of Europe's Common Market into the current European Union is a powerful challenge to the assumptions of the American Founders. The EU has an extremely ambitious regulatory agenda, reaching deeply into the internal policies of the member states. Yet it has no common army—and could not have, since some member states are committed to the NATO alliance and others are pledged to neutrality. The EU does not even have its own self-sustaining executive or law enforcement machinery, relying instead on the governmental machinery of the member states for ground-level enforcement and implementation of EU policies. And while it lacks the conventional elements of power or force, the EU also lacks a true legislature. There is a popularly elected assembly, called the European Parliament, but it is essentially an advisory body, with neither the power to tax nor the power to legislate.

What the European Union has, instead, is a central bureaucracy in Brussels (the European Commission) that elaborates new regulations. And it has a central court in Luxembourg (the European Court of Justice) that directs courts in the member states on the application of EU law. With the ready cooper-

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ation of national courts, this European Court has assumed the authority to hold even the acts of national parliaments invalid when they conflict (in the ECJ's view) with regulations of the Brussels bureaucrats or other requirements of EU treaty law. So half a continent is now governed by a curious collaboration of bureaucrats and judges, loyally supported by specialized interest groups that lobby the bureaucrats for favorable policies and then litigate before the judges to ensure their implementation by national governments.

It may be too soon to concede the success of this remarkable form of government, however—if indeed it can be considered a government. Even today, after decades of integrationist effort, European "law" does not mean the same thing in Greece or Italy as it does in Britain. While specialized interests lobby for specialized policy measures in Brussels, popular political protests still center on the elected governments of the member states. And European authorities, lacking the confidence of a direct electoral mandate, are wary of leaning too heavily on recalcitrant member states.

For the United States, at any rate, the problems of the EU are, for the moment, other peoples' problems. Indeed, by the classical principles of international law, the United States would have no clear right to object to how European states decide to share out their governing powers with neighboring states. The European Union, however, is only the most extreme instance of a larger trend that now does threaten to engulf the United States.

Pinochet's Revenge?

FORMER CHILEAN President Augusto Pinochet was sought by a Spanish magistrate wishing to try him for human rights abuses committed by the Chilean government while Pinochet was head of state. In September, with no prior warning, he was seized by British police, weeks after he had entered Britain—on a diplomatic passport for an arms-buying mission for the Chilean government. No one disputes that the military coup that brought Pinochet to power in 1973 was followed by nearly three thousand deaths or disappearances, the work of government security forces acting outside the restraints of due process. But it is also true that Chile has had a freely elected democracy since 1990 and that successive elected governments there have declined to challenge the amnesty law that protected Pinochet from domestic prosecution. Indeed, Chile's democratic government has declined even to challenge the constitutional scheme that made Pinochet commander-in-chief of the armed forces until 1997 and senator for life thereafter. So when British police arrested Pinochet, the Chilean government launched sharp and persistent protests and tried to assist Pinochet in his legal battle in the British courts.

The case for Pinochet's release turned on what had seemed a firm point of law. There has long been a customary rule of international law that courts of one country will not sit in judgment on the sovereign acts of, or the officials exercising sovereign power in, another country. As a matter of principle, to let courts in one country put the government of another on trial would be tantamount to an assertion by the first country that the second was actually subject to its authority and hence no longer fully sovereign: it would be, in effect, an attempt at conquest by courts. As a more practical matter, putting the government of another country on trial was assumed to be such a belligerent act as to be virtually an invitation to war. Thus the only exceptions to this rule until now have been cases where the home country of the defendant did not object—as in the Nuremberg trials (where the occupying Allied powers, which organized the trials, claimed to be the lawful government of Germany at the time), or in the more recent U.S. trial of deposed Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega (whose successors were delighted to have him taken into U.S. custody and removed from their midst).

Now, of course, the world at large has no legislature to establish a new rule of interna-

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tional law, supervening the customary rules about sovereign immunity. Supporters of the Pinochet prosecution claimed that the rules had been changed by a succession of human rights conventions, by which governments around the world have promised to suppress and punish genocide, torture and other human rights abuses. But none of these treaties gives clear indication that it is supposed to supersede the customary rules of sovereign immunity, and certainly none gives explicit authority for third-party states to try government officials from other countries.

So in October Britain's High Court of Justice ruled unanimously that Pinochet should be released. On appeal in the House of Lords, a five-man panel split 3-2 the other way in early December. But in a subsequent appeal, Britain's Lord Chancellor directed that a new panel should be convened to reconsider this ruling. One of the three Law Lords making up the majority turned out to have been closely associated with fund-raising efforts for Amnesty International, a human rights advocacy group that had strongly advocated Pinochet's extradition and prosecution. The Lord Chancellor held that this made the ruling of the original panel look improper and Pinochet should therefore be accorded a new appeal before a new panel of Law Lords.

But it is hard to say why Amnesty International had any less right to participate in the judgment of Pinochet—for misdeeds committed in Chile, against Chileans—than the governments of Britain or Spain. In fact, both the British prime minister and his Spanish counterpart insisted that their governments were leaving the matter to the courts and taking no policy stand on the issues. Both declined to exercise the statutory powers that political ministers in either country could have invoked to stop the extradition process. So the whole momentous prosecution was supposed to be proceeding on the say-so of career prosecutors—that is, essentially, bureaucrats—in each country.

While the British courts were deliberating, the European Parliament sought to ensure that the prosecution would go forward. It adopted a resolution urging Britain to extradite, and other governments to take up the prosecution, if Spain finally declined to do so itself. This intervention of the European Parliament had its own ironic logic: a parliament that is not a real legislature demanded enforcement of a new international doctrine that is not a real law.

And clearly, it cannot be a real law. Weak and distant Chile will not go to war with Britain or Spain or the EU. But the notion that "international law" will now hold evil-doers of all lands to account is absurd. If "international law" requires the trial of Pinochet in an outside country, then it must require similar trials to hold accountable far worse butchers from many other places. Nothing in international law, however, says that only former dictators from small countries can be held to account in this way. There is no distinction in the relevant human rights treaties between dictators and democratic officials, between top officials of small countries and top officials of powerful countries, or even between former officials and currently serving ones. But no one expects EU countries to hold a top Chinese leader to account for massacres in Tibet, or to hold former Russian officials for extradition to Latvia—or American officials for extradition to Sudan, which has been threatening to charge them with war crimes for the bombing of an undefended aspirin factory last August. The European Parliament seems to have in mind a "law" that applies only to Pinochet.

HUMAN RIGHTS advocates insist that the whole problem could be equitably handled if there were an international criminal court. And a UN conference did indeed come out with a treaty proposal to establish such a court in the summer of 1998. Its provisions were so vague and all-encompassing, however, that even the Clinton administration felt compelled to refuse its assent and the United States has since been lobbying other countries not to ratify the

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International Criminal Court (ICC) Statute. In effect, Spain's prosecution of Pinochet was a forcing of the issue by asserting the right of national courts to proceed in the name of the international community without waiting for the explicit agreement of other countries. It thus presents reluctant nations with the choice of submitting to the ICC (which does have a number of explicit procedural safeguards not recognized here by Spanish courts) or trusting to the vagaries of legal reasonings in the national courts of dozens of separate countries.

But even the ICC bids to force its jurisdiction on unwilling participants. The new court will be empowered to assert jurisdiction over war crimes and extreme abuses, not only when committed by nationals of signatory states, but also when committed against *victims* who are nationals of a signatory state. In theory, then, the ICC could be turned against the United States at the behest of Sudan, even if the United States does not itself ratify the treaty establishing the ICC. So we are back to the same basic problem. Either the ICC does not act, because its independent prosecutors have the bureaucratic nimbleness to avoid confrontation with a great power, or we have in store for us some troubling confrontations down the road.

Or would the United States finally agree to cooperate if its own citizens were called to account? Human rights advocates insist that the United States has nothing to fear because the ICC Statute acknowledges the right of home countries to conduct their own trials. But it also provides that if the trial result is judged to be inadequate or unsatisfactory, then the international prosecutor retains the authority to demand a new trial before the ICC. Then the United States would have to decide whether it would or would not go along if one of its own citizens were sought for a trial by the ICC.

Could the United States hand over an American citizen to an international tribunal, even for trial on the basis of acts committed while in the service of the U.S. government and even within the boundaries of the United States? A host of legal authorities have insisted that there is no constitutional objection to the U.S. government doing so. No one disputes that international tribunals violate guarantees in the U.S. Bill of Rights—such as the guarantee of trial by jury, which follows an English common law tradition that means nothing to international authorities. The argument is simply that if the United States can extradite its citizens to other countries for crimes committed in those countries, it can also extradite to international authorities for international crimes. But if it could do so for "war crimes", why not for other crimes? In that case, why not hand over drug dealers to an international drug court?—another venture that has received serious discussion. But then what do the guarantees in the Bill of Rights mean if they can be side-stepped any time our government finds it more convenient to have Americans tried by foreign authorities? We would then have a Constitution that can be amended without the bother of persuading three-quarters of the states to adopt a formal amendment.

Perhaps it will not come to that. But it is remarkable that we no longer feel the need for a constitutional boundary. Do we rely on public sentiment to stiffen the resolve of our government? If so, we may be misguided, for the new trend in international affairs is for transnational coalitions of advocacy groups to play on public sentiment in order to bolster the authority of international institutions.

Global Civil Society vs. Australia

THAT IS just what happened in Australia at the same time the Pinochet case was proceeding through the British courts.

On November 30, 1998 the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO voted to condemn the government of Australia for allowing a uranium mine to operate in close proximity to an Australian national park that had been designated as a World Heritage site.

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The committee agreed that the government of Australia should be given six months to defend the mine against findings of an international inspection team that the mine would endanger the scenic values of the Kakadu Park and its cultural significance for aboriginal people nearby. If Australia could not by then satisfy the committee, the park would be placed on the list of sites "in danger."

What made this episode remarkable was, in the first place, the willingness of this UN forum to enter into a confrontational dispute with a participating government. The World Heritage Convention essentially establishes a registry of sites in participating countries that are judged to be of special significance for the whole world. Essentially, it is the UN equivalent of a landmark registry, which has come to include such sites as India's Taj Mahal, America's Yellowstone National Park and France's Louvre Museum. A committee of representatives from twenty-one states, elected from all the states party to the convention, oversees the list. The committee not only decides which sites may qualify but purports to monitor their continuing safekeeping. Its only sanction for such purposes is to list a deteriorating site on a separate list of sites "in danger" and ultimately, if the dangers are not addressed, to de-list the site. No site has ever been de-listed.

Indeed, no site has ever been put on the "in danger" list except at the request of the home state. Some states have requested such listing as a way of dramatizing problems and seeking international financial assistance for corrective actions. But states that fear embarrassment have often resisted listing on the "in danger" list. Ecuador, for example, asked the World Heritage Committee to organize international assistance for what it admitted were serious problems in its management of its World Heritage site in the Galapagos Islands. But it specifically requested that the site not be listed as "in danger"—and it was not. The obvious reason to avoid such listing is that the whole scheme—such as it is—depends on the cooperation of the affected

Remote, Unaccountable Elites

At one level, it's extraordinary that some pip-squeak Spanish magistrate can spur half the governments of the EU, NATO, and the Group of Seven industrialized nations into making a grab for General Pinochet. But in America, the playground of judicial activism, it's a familiar trajectory: Progressive thinkers have long understood that on matters on which there's no social consensus, you can make quicker changes through the courts than in the legislature. It's no coincidence that international human-rights law shares the same thinking. . . .

Needless to say, the traffic's all in one direction. Those Muslim and Third World countries that regard abortion as an abomination would be unlikely to persuade a British court to place a visiting Bill Clinton under house arrest on the grounds of "crimes against humanity" for the million and a half American fetuses aborted each year.

And that's why international law is a bad thing. In the end, there are very few things the world agrees on. Different jurisdictions generally reflect the will of their people. But a global jurisdiction reflects not the will of the world's population, only the morality of a remote, unaccountable elite increasingly disinclined to respect the once fundamental premise of international law—that states should respect each other's sovereignty.

—*Mark Steyn*, Sunday Telegraph, *November 29, 1998*

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governments; a government that does not want to cooperate can simply walk away.

But the committee in this case took a very hard line because of another difference: within Australia itself, political opponents of the current conservative government were prepared to support—indeed, even invite—international intervention. The environmental spokesman for the opposition Labor Party actually wrote to the World Heritage Committee to urge it to take a tough stand. The networking skills of domestic opponents were altogether remarkable. Environmentalists, who seem to have opposed the mine in large part due to general opposition to nuclear power, managed to draw attention to the handful of aboriginal people who did oppose the mine, obscuring the majority view of local aborigines who stood to gain substantial payments from the mining company. Australian environmentalists have organized a separate Green Party, but with only two seats in the Australian parliament it is in itself a negligible threat to the government. But an Australian Green leader managed to make his case to important Green ministers in the governments of Western Europe and, in this way, secured a vote of the *European* Parliament urging Australia to shut down the mine. The same sort of back-channel mobilization has been credited with persuading the French government to take a tough stand against the mine through the French representative on the current World Heritage Committee.

The ultimate result is still uncertain but the pattern is clear. An international institution with no real authority has gained special leverage by acting as a bridge between opposition factions in one country and allies in other countries—over a matter that has no real connection to those other countries.

And this is not an isolated case. In its 1995 report, the UN Commission on Global Governance hailed the emergence of what it called "global civil society", which it saw as "best expressed in the global non-governmental movement." It did not mean business firms, churches or sports clubs—all of which are also "non-governmental." It meant advocacy groups. It noted that NGOs have proliferated at a remarkable rate over the past decade and praised their "vital assistance to the UN in the conduct of its work." Such organizations

> often provide independent monitoring, early-warning and information gathering services that can be especially useful in preventive diplomacy. They can serve as unofficial or alternative channels of communication and can help establish relationships that create the trust necessary to bridge political gaps.

Also, though the report does not quite note the fact, NGOs never have to face voters or bear any sort of accountability. It is not clear, in any case, who would be entitled to demand accountability from them, since they so often claim to speak for "humanity" or "the earth", constituencies that are not well equipped to demand any sort of direct accounting.

"Global civil society" is, in the older understanding, virtually an oxymoron. What makes a society "civil", in the classical liberal view, is a common government, able to enact and enforce common rules. The United Nations is not a government. What UN agencies seek is an authority that is somehow above government, without the accountability that actual governments have toward particular electorates or defined citizen bodies. Actual governments can be awkward for UN agencies. It is usually much easier to deal with constituencies that do not themselves have to pay UN bills or submit to UN directives. NGOs—a sort of phantom citizenry—are the perfect partners for the phantom authority exercised by UN agencies. So the UN and other international institutions have become great sponsors of NGOs, which figure prominently at UN conferences on global concerns. The World Bank, eager to deflect NGO criticism, has actually poured over a third of a billion dollars into NGO coffers in recent years. (And, not coincidentally, the European Commission in Brussels funds European NGOs on an even more lavish scale.)

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Past Australian governments have cheerfully cooperated with NGOs working through international forums on other issues. Now the current government is finding it hard to ignore the World Heritage Committee, as local advocates demand adherence to the Committee's direction in the name of "international law."

Thinking Globally, Acting Locally

ON December 12, 1998 the U.S. Supreme Court issued a stay of execution for Joseph Stanley Faulder less than thirty minutes before he was scheduled to die by lethal injection in Texas. The state of Texas was hardly acting with undue haste: Faulder had been on death row for twenty-one years. It was, in other words, the classic sort of death penalty appeal in America's endless litigation over capital punishment.

Faulder had been convicted for the brutal killing of a seventy-five year-old woman, leaving her to be found by her relatives "bludgeoned, bound with tape and Christmas wrapping paper, a knife protruding from her chest." Faulder never denied the charges. But years after his conviction he remembered that he was a Canadian citizen, something he had not mentioned to Texas officials at the time of his arrest, when he was found with a Colorado driver's license. So after many other failed appeals on other grounds, Faulder's lawyers launched the argument that his conviction violated the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, which obligates signatory states, when they arrest a foreign citizen for a serious crime, to notify the nearest consulate of the defendant's home country. Texas officials, not knowing of Faulder's Canadian citizenship, did not notify Canadian officials until 1991—when he was deep into his various procedural appeals on other grounds.

What made the Supreme Court's intervention so notable was that a very similar case had been presented earlier in the same year. In that case, lawyers for a Paraguayan national, Angel Breard, who were appealing his death sentence in Virginia, persuaded the government of Paraguay to file claims before the International Court of Justice in The Hague, based on Virginia's failure to notify Paraguayan officials at the time of the trial. The ICJ asked Virginia to postpone the execution while the matter was considered by international authorities, and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright pleaded for Virginia to do so out of respect for international law. But Virginia refused and a last-minute attempt to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court was denied by the justices.

The Faulder case followed the same script—earnest diplomatic entreaties from the Canadian foreign minister, followed by earnest entreaties from Albright, followed by the rejection of these entreaties by state officials in Texas. Only this time, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered the execution postponed to give itself time to consider the issues.

The Court may yet decide that the execution can go forward. The preamble to the relevant Vienna Convention stipulates that its purpose is to clarify "consular relations privileges and immunities" and "is not to benefit individuals but to ensure the efficient performance of functions by consular posts." In a survey conducted through U.S. embassies around the world, the State Department was unable to find a single case in which another country had overturned a criminal conviction in its own courts solely because a foreign defendant had not been advised of his rights to consult consular officials from his own country. And there seems to be no reason at all to believe that Faulder's trial would have turned out any differently if he had sought and received the opportunity to consult with a Canadian consulate before his trial commenced.

But none of that may matter. The United States remains one of the few countries in the Western world that still maintain capital punishment. And by no coincidence the state with the largest number of capital sentences is Texas, followed in second place by Virginia.

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And once again the specific case turns out to be the flashpoint of a larger international campaign. At the beginning of 1998, a UN special reporter issued a report condemning the United States for racist and abusive applications of the death penalty—ignoring the repeated judgments of U.S. courts, up to and including the U.S. Supreme Court, to the contrary. The European Parliament was—for once—not dragged into this dispute. But Amnesty International, taking time out from its advocacy for the prosecution of Pinochet in Europe, took notice.

An Amnesty report on human rights abuses in the United States, issued in 1998, devotes an entire chapter to abuses of the death penalty, which it asserts to be contrary to international law. Yes, it acknowledges, the U.S. Senate specifically inserted a reservation into its ratification of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, stipulating that the Covenant's death penalty restrictions were not accepted by the United States. But this reservation, according to Amnesty, conflicts with a subsequent ruling of the UN's Human Rights Committee about evolving standards of customary international law that must now make the U.S. reservation on this point unlawful. And, of course, Amnesty lawyers in Canada helped to organize the Faulder appeal, as other human rights groups had mobilized to resist the earlier execution of Angel Breard.

What Next?

SO WE have free-floating, evolving standards of "law" defined by international bureaucrats. We have organized advocacy groups in transnational coalitions. And we may soon have U.S. courts applying this law at the behest of these groups. In other words, all the elements of EU-style governance are already in place. Is this kind of government really consistent with the U.S. Constitution?

In at least three ways, the most prominent commentators have already promulgated legal theories that prepare the way. First, the latest *Restatement of Foreign Relations Law* (1987), a privately sponsored treatise that holds special prestige in an area of law with very little case law, asserts that there is now a federal common law of foreign relations, by which federal courts are empowered to impose their rulings on states and localities, even where there is no direct treaty or statute on which to rely but simply a federal court's notion of evolving international law. In domestic law, the notion of a free-floating judge-made common law of this kind was firmly repudiated by the Supreme Court in the 1930s. The *Restatement* argues, however, that international obligations of the federal government require a different approach for cases with an international dimension. Thus it has an entire chapter on "customary international law of human rights", which is supposed to be drawn from the spirit of existing treaties but applicable to the United States even where the Senate has not ratified the relevant treaty or has attached particular exceptions by reservation. Already a number of lower federal courts have relied on this "law" to allow suits against U.S. corporations (pursued in U.S. courts by U.S.-based advocacy groups) for supposed human rights or environmental depredations by their corporate subsidiaries in Asia and South America.

Second, the historic constitutional doctrine was that even formal treaties—let alone customary law, adopted without treaties—could not reach entirely domestic affairs. The treaty power and other foreign affairs powers of the federal government could only reach genuinely inter-national matters. The latest *Restatement* insists that such restrictions can no longer be maintained. And understandably so. If human rights conventions and the World Heritage Convention are bona fide treaties, then it is reasonable to say that what the U.S. Park Service does in Yellowstone National Park and what Philadelphia police do to Americans in Philadelphia are properly subject to international inspection—as indeed they have been over the past decade, though

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the binding effect of international interventions in these cases is much in dispute.

Finally, it was once clear doctrine that the treaty power could not be delegated to foreign bodies—that Senate ratification could bind the United States to the terms of an agreement, but not to subsequent extensions or extrapolations of the agreement by an international authority. While the *Restatement* skirts the issue, Professor Louis Henkin, who was the chief reporter for the *Restatement*, published in 1996 a new edition of his own treatise, *Foreign Affairs and the Constitution* (Oxford University Press), which explicitly repudiates such a non-delegation doctrine. Thus what the UN Human Rights Committee or the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO pronounces to be the law may well be taken as binding law for the United States (which is the case even though the United States is no longer a member of UNESCO). At least in Henkin's view, the Constitution does not forbid the United States from submitting to an arrangement in which this would be so.

World Order in a Post-Liberal World

DOES ANY OF this really matter? Before dismissing the significance of recent episodes, one ought to step back and look at the larger picture. Along with human rights treaties, we have begun to spin out a network of far-reaching new environmental treaties, culminating in the stupifyingly ambitious project of the Kyoto Protocol, which envisions international authorities empowered to enforce dramatic reductions in energy use among the world's major economies. The U.S. Senate has balked at ratifying this treaty, but its champions—in the Clinton administration and in a host of environmental advocacy groups—insist that it is necessary to avert global warming. The necessity is disputed by many respectable scientists and policy analysts. But surely this undertaking is at least as "necessary" as international supervision of parks policy in Australia or criminal justice in Texas. The ideology of global governance already has considerable momentum.

Meanwhile, there is continuing pressure to extend the terms of international trade agreements, which up until now have largely focused on reciprocal lowering of barriers to imports, while scrupulously refraining from imposing any standards for how goods entering into international trade are actually produced in their home countries. But President Clinton has repeatedly urged that the World Trade Organization must begin to develop standards that would prevent countries with unfair labor practices or unacceptably lax environmental controls from unfairly flooding the markets of countries whose own producers must observe higher standards.

At Kyoto, it was decided that if poor countries are not now willing to participate in energy reduction schemes, then a select group of richer nations should set them an example by taking one-sided commitments on themselves. We might see the European Union seek to negotiate such an approach to labor and environmental standards, which would apply to the United States and other affluent countries, even if rejected by China and India. And it is not altogether inconceivable that the United States would participate in such a venture, since it has already made limited—but precedent setting—commitments about internal labor and environmental standards in the NAFTA accords with Canada and Mexico. Clinton himself limned the vision in his latest State of the Union address: we must strive to give international trade "a human face", as earlier in this century we supplied a "human face" to interstate commerce at home. In plainer language, the New Deal for the U.S. economy must now be followed up with a New Deal for the world economy, with the United States itself fully accepting the new international controls this will require.

If the Constitution sets no barrier to such projects, then we may see the United States drawn deeper into a style of governance that looks very much like what the EU countries are now experiencing. True, it would not nec-

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essarily involve such a systematic program of integration or such powerful central institutions. But we could, like the Europeans, start by forswearing any notion of a super-legislature and end up with more and more governance by courts and bureaucrats, answering only to advocacy groups that are themselves unaccountable.

On the other hand, it may turn out that the American political system will summon a deep resistance to any such serious foreign intrusions. The United States has been a holdout against many sorts of grand international ventures in this century—from the League of Nations to the Law of the Sea Treaty, from the Children's Rights Convention to the International Criminal Court. Perhaps the first time an international commitment imposes real cost or hardship in domestic affairs, without any direct U.S. legislative endorsement, Congress will rise up and sweep away all the grand visions of the law professors and the advocacy groups. In its domestic applications, international law may turn out to be the equivalent of those codes of proper political campaign tactics or proper journalistic practice, which are sponsored by well-meaning foundations, adumbrated by idealistic academics, endorsed by high-minded editorialists—and ignored by all real-world practitioners.

But the most likely development may not follow either of these alternatives. Lacking an international legislature or an international executive, champions of international law have maintained their credibility by learning to pick their spots—ducking out of sight when legal claims are strongly resisted, re-emerging in those settings where issue networks have prepared the way for success. It will, in other words, be a selective, inconsistent, bureaucratic sort of law, which has a lot of "give" along with its occasional "bite."

That is, after all, what should be expected from the demise of our founding constitutional traditions—a reversion to a pre-liberal world. Sovereignty was itself a concept of the Enlightenment and a part of the liberal vision of law and politics. There was certainly law of a kind in medieval Europe. As Enlightenment thinkers saw it in retrospect, the problem in the medieval world was not too little law but too much. There was the legal edict of the medieval emperors, battling with the opposing constitutional claims of the medieval church, and both in constant tension with a network of feudal relations with their own legal claims. It was also a world without distinct peoples—in the constitutional sense—and without legislatures, in the modern sense of lawmaking bodies. Above all the conflicting, often highly parochial legalistic claims, medieval Europe had a set of visionaries who conversed across borders in a common language unknown to ordinary people—Latin. And its most devoted visionaries talked endlessly about the unity of Christendom, a vision they sustained for centuries in the face of all evidence to the contrary.

This is not a world that any of the American Founders looked back on with nostalgia. But it seems to appeal very much to the champions of global civil society. It remains unclear whether the Constitution can still keep the United States from joining it. □

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Macedonia: The Next Domino?

Marshall Freeman Harris

TO THE WESTERN eye, Macedonia can seem to be a mass of contrasts and contradictions. It is sparsely populated and has little strategic or geopolitical importance, yet forces in neighboring countries hold that its statehood and national identity pose grave threats to their security. Its Macedonian population and Albanian minority coexist in cities and towns across the country, yet, in many cases, lead totally separate lives. Above Lake Ohrid, its glaciers, mountains and waterfalls form a landscape with the seemingly impossible beauty of an amateurish oil painting, yet only miles away impoverished families crowd into single rooms in primitive houses. In Skopje, the capital, the peal of bells from the Orthodox cathedral mingles with Muslim prayer calls and, of all things, the familiar melodies of Wesley hymns from the local Methodist church.

For the past year, the local scene has been even more incongruous: as Macedonian and ethnic Albanian citizens have gone about the business of their daily lives, Serbian forces across the border in Kosovo have been killing hundreds of Albanian men, women and children, driving hundreds of thousands into the wilderness, and razing villages to the ground.

A key objective of current U.S. foreign policy is to halt this violence and prevent it from spreading into Macedonia and elsewhere beyond Kosovo. As in Bosnia, the United States is trying to do this by imposing an expedient, Dayton-style settlement that meets with the approval of the Serbian regime of Slobodan Milosevic and that sacrifices the rights of the Kosovar Albanians. To justify its expediency, the U.S. administration invokes a domino theory: if Kosovo again dissolves into war, Macedonia and Albania will be drawn inexorably into the conflict. Then Greece and Turkey, two U.S. allies and NATO members, will be pulled into a full-blown Balkan war that, in turn, could spread still farther or tear the Atlantic Alliance apart.

These fears are genuine, particularly regarding Macedonia, which, six years after independence, remains one of the world's most fragile and imperiled democracies. This former Yugoslav republic is surrounded by four countries in which powerful political forces, at best, prefer that it remain weak and vulnerable and, at worst, seek its dissolution.

To the west, forces in Albania may have designs on Macedonia's western regions, which are largely populated by ethnic Albanians. They hold that the Macedonian Albanians, who may constitute as much as 40 percent of Macedonia's population of two million, have no real historic ties to the ethnic Macedonians and only tenuous political

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links to the new Macedonian state. They belong instead, it is claimed, in their motherland of Albania or some future pan-Albanian federation.

To the north, Serbia has attempted to weaken, if not impoverish, its former Yugoslav partner-republic, just as it did through violent means with Bosnia, Croatia and Slovenia before their successful campaigns for independence. As Yugoslavia dissolved, Milosevic's Belgrade regime expropriated all of the Yugoslav army's weaponry and other equipment in Macedonia, as well as a number of other economic and financial assets in the republic. It also laid claim to territory along the Serbian-Macedonian border. Since then, it has reportedly armed the small Serbian minority population within Macedonia.

To the east, Bulgarian political forces continue to lay at least rhetorical claim to Macedonian territory. Bulgaria now enjoys the most progressively democratic government in the Balkans, but, historically, Bulgarians have viewed the territory that is now Macedonia as part of Bulgaria. In the nineteenth century, Bulgarian leaders purportedly moved their capital to Sofia, in the far western part of the country, with the expectation that it would be the political and geographical center of a greater Bulgaria. Today, among viable political forces outside of the government, the view is still widespread that the Macedonians are ethnic Bulgarians separated from their motherland only by an artificial frontier and an ersatz Macedonian language.

To the south, Greece has sustained a six-year campaign to prevent the country's recognition under its preferred name, the Republic of Macedonia. In Athens' view, the nomenclature "Macedonia" is Greek—it is the name of the ancient territory that now constitutes part of the northernmost province of modern

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Greece—and, if "expropriated" by Skopje, would give vent to irredentism among the Slavic "Skopjeans." To prevent this in the years immediately following Macedonian independence, Greece opposed international political and economic support for Macedonia. It imposed two devastating unilateral trade embargoes, and prevented Macedonia from using its preferred name in the United Nations and other international forums.

Since Macedonian independence, Western nations have done little to ease these regional tensions or to facilitate Macedonia's transition into modern statehood. When U.S. Ambassador Robert Frowick and I arrived in Skopje in 1992 to establish a monitoring mission for the Commission (now Organization) for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), we were virtually the only Westerners in town. Due to the first Greek embargo and UN sanctions against Serbia, the economy was in dire straits. Skopje's streets were uncharacteristically quiet and dusty. Shops were filled, but with goods that most Macedonians could not afford and that could not be exported due to sanctions and the embargo. The political scene was dominated by ethnic, former communist and nationalist parties rather than purely democratic ones. The media were, for the most part, state-controlled or at least state-subsidized. Privatization, to the extent that it took place at all, benefited communist-era managers of enterprises and cronies of government officials.

During the past six years, too little of this has changed. In Macedonia's formative years, the pursuit of consensus in the OSCE and European Union weakened, if not eliminated, critical European support for the country. In the United States, deference to Serbia, on which President Bill Clinton has developed a self-imposed dependency for keeping the peace in Bosnia, and the Greek-American lobby, on which the Clinton administration relies for domestic political support, have also ensured that Macedonia remains in a political and economic limbo.

To a large extent, President Clinton has merely continued the policies of his predecessor, who was equally cowed by Serbia and the Greek-American lobby. Having vainly supported the continuation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the face of growing Serbian hegemony, if not tyranny, President George Bush finally accepted the realities of new Bosnian, Croatian and Slovenian states in April 1992. Citing the need for time to cool the passions of the Greek populace, however, Deputy Secretary Lawrence Eagleburger prevailed upon Secretary James Baker, and Greek Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis prevailed upon Bush, for a short delay in granting diplomatic recognition to Macedonia. Bush agreed. Rather than honoring their commitments to prepare their people for the inevitability of Macedonian statehood, Mitsotakis and Greek-American leaders then launched a massive campaign to turn the U.S. delay into a permanent denial of recognition and use of the Macedonian name. As Bosnia was attacked by Serbian forces and struggled for survival, Macedonia slipped from the administration's limited radar screen, and the short delay in recognition grew ever longer. After Bush lost the 1992 presidential election, Ambassador Frowick courageously bucked the trend by formally asking Eagleburger and the lame-duck administration to recognize Macedonia. He was ignored.

As the Greek-American lobby escalated its campaign, the Clinton administration tacitly accepted the Greek embargoes of Macedonia and, on the name issue, supported seemingly interminable UN mediations that harmed Macedonia's development by leaving it as a sort of quasi-state, with a de facto status greater than that of a constituent Yugoslav republic but less than that of a real nation. When the Clinton administration finally recognized Macedonia two years after independence, it recognized it as the "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", one of Greece's preferred appellations. It also declined to grant full diplomatic relations to the new republic. The normally automatic

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process by which diplomatic relations immediately follow recognition was halted, not because some U.S. national interest was invoked but because, in one of the most hysterical moments of the new presidency, Greek-Americans persuaded White House adviser George Stefanopoulos to intervene with Clinton. As a result of further Greek-American lobbying, the U.S. Postal Service delivered mail and the major telephone companies logged calls not to Macedonia but to the "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia." Even today, Bell Atlantic bills list calls to Skopje as "FYR Macedonia."

UNCHAINED from domestic politics, genuine U.S. interests demanded a different outcome. As elsewhere in central and eastern Europe, these interests are centered on the promotion of pro-Western, democratic governments, media, and other institutions; the fullest possible expression of political rights and civil liberties; and free trade. A corollary of this is opposition to political repression, to the mistreatment of religious, ethnic, and other minorities, and to territorial adventurism.

In Macedonia's case, advancing these interests would have meant immediately accepting the newly independent republic's right to self-determination, statehood and international recognition, the criteria for which Skopje had clearly met in European and other international political institutions. Part of this self-determination, as former Assistant Secretary of State Hodding Carter told Greek officials during a non-governmental mediation mission four years ago, is the "right of a people and nation to identify themselves by the names by which they have historically known themselves and believe themselves to be", particularly when, as was clearly the case in Macedonia, the people and nation have forsworn extraterritorial and other related ambitions.

More specifically, advancing U.S. interests would have meant rejecting categorically Greece's claims regarding Macedonia's name; demanding, under penalty of sanctions, ends to the Greek trade embargoes; moving rapidly to admit Macedonia into international political and economic institutions; providing large-scale aid to Macedonia; and issuing firm warnings to Milosevic not to interfere in Macedonia. It also would have meant accepting Greece's justifiable claim that Macedonia should replace its flag, which prominently featured a symbol indigenous to ancient Greek territory.

Sadly, the United States has done little along these lines. In the absence of a Bosnia-style conflagration, it has nevertheless been able to claim a foreign policy victory, regardless of the inordinately high cost of this policy to Macedonia. Now, with Serbian forces and the Kosovar Albanian defenders poised to renew the fighting in Kosovo, the situation has grown more dangerous. Once again we are hearing the talk of dominos falling in Macedonia and beyond.

If Bosnia and Kosovo provide any guide, it is that the United States would intervene in Macedonia, albeit perhaps belatedly, to prevent an escalation involving Greece and Turkey. It also suggests, however, that the Clinton administration would do so by building a firewall around Macedonia rather than saving it, thereby allowing at least part of the destruction to continue. The much vaunted greater Balkan war would then be averted not so much as a result of U.S. leadership, but of cynicism.

Today, the confluence of two new political developments is beginning to mitigate against unrest in Macedonia and to make it less likely that even this initial domino will fall. First, Greece's socialist government has grown less vituperative over the dangers posed by what the Mitsotakis team characterized as Skopje's "expansionist" and "communist" forces. While by no means abandoning its name-claim and other central tenets of nationalist Greek policies, the PASOK leadership seems, in general, more willing to reach at least a tacit accommodation with its northern neighbor. Indeed, it has taken major steps

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to improve relations not only with Macedonia, but also with Albania and Bulgaria.

Second and more important, Macedonia has just elected a new government that seems virtually certain to undertake a serious campaign to create a viable economy, and to reverse the regressive and cronyist policies of its post-communist predecessor. Despite its nationalist overtones, it has also vowed to improve conditions with the country's Albanian minority. In apparent good faith, it has even brought one bloc of ethnic Albanian political forces into the government. It has also led the parliament in granting amnesty to two ethnic Albanian mayors who, under the previous government, were sentenced to four and seven-year prison terms for flying the Albanian flag at their town halls. Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski and key advisers like Boris Trajkovski have advocated ethnic tolerance and moderation since Frowick and I first met them, as opposition figures, six years ago. Now we must see whether they can put these commitments into practice by checking and otherwise controlling the more nationalist, if not extremist, elements that are undoubtedly in the orbit of their governing coalition.

A third positive force may nevertheless prove to be essential: a shift in U.S. policies. Three U.S. moves could be decisive in preventing further unrest in the region. The first would be for the Clinton administration to end its deference to the Milosevic regime in Serbia, which has orchestrated four wars in seven years and appears eager for a fifth. It could do this by imposing a more just, stabilizing and democratic settlement that gives the Kosovar Albanians a parliament and other elements of genuine self-governance, as well as a referendum or a similar vehicle for the province of Kosovo to leave Serbia and achieve international recognition if the Serbian regime continues its political repression. Second, the administration could also work more vigorously to foster democracy and undermine the Milosevic regime within Serbia proper. The third step would be for the Clinton administration to provide more direct assistance to build democratic political, economic, social and cultural institutions in Macedonia. A corollary of this is for President Clinton to be less cravenly deferential to Greek-American interests by forcing Athens to launch a continuing dialogue and resolve its remaining differences with—and claims against—Skopje.

These are, of course, long-term regional prospects. Recently, however, one small, positive sign suggests that Macedonia can survive if its struggle remains a war of attrition rather than a violent conflict. In October, when President Clinton described the deal that U.S. Envoy Richard Holbrooke had made with Milosevic to avert air strikes against Serbia in response to its attacks in Kosovo, he called Macedonia "Macedonia." This may have only been because the President and his handlers realized that, in selling their latest appeasement of the Serbian dictator as a great show of U.S. strength and leadership, they were already straining the patience and credulity of the American people. It may also have been only a slip of the tongue from the ridiculous encumbrances of our official nomenclature. Nevertheless, there it was—a startling moment of clarity. Along with the promise of a new government in Skopje and the easing of tensions with Athens, this moment may herald a new era: the beginning of the Republic of Macedonia's emergence not from the jaws of history, but from the thick fog of modern U.S. politics. □

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China and the Quest for Dignity

John Fitzgerald

That the people is without shame means that the state is without shame.

—Kang Youwei, c.1900

MARXISM has completed its historical tour of duty. Thus although the relationship between Marxism and nationalism has hardly been exhausted as a subject of theoretical inquiry, it barely seems to matter any longer in contemporary China. What does beg analysis now is the relationship between *liberalism* and nationalism in contemporary public life.

In recent years, the respective—and, to both participants and most Western observers, conflicting—claims of individual human rights and collective national rights have been thrown into relief by the publication of Wei Jingsheng's *Letters From Prison*[1] alongside a series of books that have appeared in China under variations on the title *China Can Say No*. In his letters, Wei recounts his struggle for individual dignity over almost two decades of internment and intermittent political activism. His message is that the state should recognize the inherent dignity of individuals. The authors of the *Say No* books, on the other hand, have no time for "individualism" or for "American-style human rights." Instead, they rise to defend China's dignity as a nation, and brand local human rights activists as foolish if not treacherous for conspiring with foreign governments to obstruct the country's rise to great power status. For all their differences, both are concerned with the same issue: that of dignity.

This, however, does not mean that the differences between liberal and nationalist discourses in contemporary China can be reduced to a simple conflict between individual and national dignity. For both sides share a concern for the national dignity of China. Wei wrote his first articles on democracy precisely to show that the Chinese were not "a bunch of spineless weaklings", and that when individual citizens learned to straighten their spines China would stand tall in the world. Similarly, there is no lack of concern for individual dignity in the writings of his nationalist opponents. The resentment that surfaces in the *Say No* literature is grounded in deeply etched personal experiences of national humiliation.

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Editor's note: All primary-source Chinese citations are available from the editor upon request.

[1]Wei Jingsheng, *The Courage to Stand Alone: Letters from Prison and Other Writings*, ed. and trans. Kristina M. Torgeson (New York: Viking, 1997).

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Liah Greenfeld has argued that the politics of indignation, or *ressentiment*, drives nationalism.[2] I shall argue that *ressentiment*, grounded in personal indignation, also drives the struggle for individual dignity and human rights. The motive we commonly ascribe to China's drive for economic development and its citizens' struggle for civil rights is the rational pursuit of self-interest—variously described as the self-interest of a party seeking to maintain its legitimacy in an ideological vacuum, or of a government intent on maximizing revenues and authority, or of citizens hoping to multiply options for the pursuit of life, liberty and personal happiness. We make too little allowance for the possibility that China pursues wealth and power for the sake of asserting national dignity, and that citizens demand rights, not in pursuit of liberty or happiness, but out of concern to preserve personal dignity. If this is indeed the case, then personal resentment and nationalist *ressentiment* appear to be fused in a complex and explosive mixture.

The most volatile element in this mixture is what Francis Fukuyama has termed the struggle for "recognition." In *The End of History and the Last Man*, Fukuyama identifies the passion that drives people to make war against one another with the longing that drives them to fight for democracy. This he terms (after Plato) *thymos*, or the "desire for recognition." *Thymos* accounts for a "propensity to feel self-esteem":

> It is like an innate human sense of justice. People believe that they have a certain worth, and when other people treat them as though they are worth less than that, they experience the emotion of anger. Conversely, when people fail to live up to their own sense of worth, they feel shame, and when they are evaluated correctly in proportion to their worth, they feel pride.[3]

In the field of China studies, the idea of recognition has been tainted by association with a discredited nineteenth-century ethnography of "face." As Fukuyama defines it, however, *thymos* is not a particular cultural trait but a universal characteristic of human societies, and he appeals to it in order to answer one of the critical political questions of our time: Is there a necessary connection between the pursuit of national wealth and power, on the one hand, and the attainment of liberal democracy and human rights on the other?

Some have argued for a mechanical, functional connection between the two, on the assumption that democracy alone is capable of mediating the tangled web of conflicting interests created in the course of developing a complex modern economy. Fukuyama disagrees. Others have argued for a managerial relationship, suggesting that as autocratic regimes degenerate over time, elites responsible for managing the state come to assume a leading role in liberalizing it as well. Again Fukuyama disagrees. Another well-known line of argument is that democracy arises when successful industrialization produces an ascending middle class that develops an interest in defending its class position by institutionalizing its rights. Yet again Fukuyama disagrees. Democracy, he argues, has no simple economic rationale. "The choice of democracy is an autonomous one, undertaken for the sake of recognition and not for the sake of [material] desire."[4]

Fukuyama's emphasis on *thymos* presents a serious challenge to the analysis of national development and international politics, for it undermines the rational, empiricist assumptions of Anglo-American political philosophy, while celebrating the triumph of its political achievements. Basically, Fukuyama—and

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[2]Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

[3]Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992), p. xv.

[4]Ibid., pp. 117, 205-6.

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Isaiah Berlin, too[5]—argues that the impetus for both national economic development *and* liberal democracy is best explained by reference to "irrational" forces arising from the struggle for recognition, not as an outcome of the rational pursuit of self-interest. The drive for economic self-improvement is not the engine of political development; both are by-products of an even deeper impulse.

THIS HYPOTHESIS presents a particular challenge to students of modern China. Fukuyama presses us to identify with precision the processes whereby rising prosperity may lead to political pluralism. Of itself, the economistic argument that economic development leads to democracy is abstract and dehistoricized. "It papers over the interval until the calm of wealth prevails", Eric Jones has observed, "a time that in reality has to be *struggled through*" [emphasis added].[6] We need to consider the forms such struggles may assume in different historical instances—in particular, the forms assumed by thymotic desire for national and personal dignity in China today.

National dignity clearly held a prior claim over individual dignity in public life when the Chinese people "stood up" in 1949. The two were momentarily congruent: when the state was without shame, the people who made up the nation were without shame as well. After the Cultural Revolution petered out in the 1970s, space emerged in public life for people to challenge such congruence. Jonathan Spence caught this moment in his foreword to a translated collection of Chinese short stories published in 1983:

> There is extraordinary agreement among these writers about the loss of dignity that afflicts all Chinese denied privacy, in housing as in thought, forced forever to jostle and bargain and plead until the shouts become cries and the cries blows.[7]

For many people, the loss of private dignity casts the achievement of national dignity into doubt. What is the good of a whole people "standing up" in the world if they cannot "stand up" as individuals in their own homes? This question has left its traces in biography, essays, wall-posters and letters produced in China over the past decade. In this essay I select a sample of recent literature touching on the subject of dignity—Li Zhisui's memoirs, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*,[8] examples of the *China Can Say No* genre, and selected writings of Wei Jingsheng—to highlight the incongruence between a China that "stood up" in 1949 and the felt experience of a people reduced to jostling, crying and trading blows at home. The same body of literature hints at the potential for reconciling the claims of individual and national rights around the idea of dignity itself.

Are there grounds for hope for China in this respect? I shall argue that a common ideal of dignity lies at the heart of nationalist discourse and liberal democratic theory alike. I shall argue, too, that, inadequately, Chinese nationalism has inadvertently incubated an ideal of individual rights and individual self-determination within its discourse on national rights. For almost half a century, official

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[5]Well before Fukuyama, the place of dignity in history was eloquently conveyed by Isaiah Berlin in a lecture delivered in New Delhi in 1961. In it, Berlin maintained that what drove nationalism was "a wounded or outraged sense of human dignity, the desire for recognition." See Berlin, "Rabindranath Tagore and the Consciousness of Nationality", in *The Sense of Reality: Studies in Ideas and Their History*, ed. Henry Hardy (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1997).

[6]Jones, "Kegs of Powder, Barrels of Oil", *Quadrant* (November 1996), pp. 80-1.

[7]Spence, foreword to *Mao's Harvest: Voices from China's New Generation*, ed. Helen Siu and Zelda Stern (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983).

[8]Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao: The Inside Story of the Man Who Made Modern China* (New York: Random House, 1994).

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nationalism has developed a popular language of exploitation, oppression, dehumanization and humiliation through which people could explain and resolve affronts to China's dignity. Today, they can appeal to an identical language to press their claims for individual rights before the state. The politics of individual dignity, far from being antithetical, appears to be parasitical on the idea of national dignity. Paradoxically, then, resurgent nationalism does offer ground for hope that China's wheel is turning, slowly but surely, to recognizing the inherent dignity of the individual.

Standing Up: The Rhetoric of National Dignity

LI ZHISUI'S *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* is infamous within China for divulging intimate court secrets about the founder of the People's Republic. In passing, however, Dr. Li also discloses the personal ruminations of an educated Chinese doctor from a comfortable family background who happened to be traveling abroad before becoming Chairman Mao's physician. Dr. Li was in Sydney, Australia, in January 1949 when news came through that the People's Liberation Army had occupied Beijing. He was elated that "China could finally assume her rightful place in the world" and within six months had resolved to return home to devote his life to his people and his country.

Over the course of his travels in China and abroad, Dr. Li had grown acutely aware of China's decline as an imperial power, a decline, he says, that was captured poignantly by "the famous sign at the entrance to the riverside park along the Shanghai Bund—'Chinese and dogs not allowed.'" He encountered further evidence of China's national humiliation in Sydney:

> As a Chinese, I could live there temporarily, practice medicine, and make good money, but I could never become a citizen. My pride and self-respect cried out against this racist policy. Still, I stayed in Sydney, in a small boardinghouse, surrounded by Australians who thought China was hopeless. I became increasingly depressed.

Dr. Li cured his depression in Beijing, to which he returned in time to witness the triumphal founding ceremony of the People's Republic at Tiananmen on October 1, 1949. He recalled Mao Zedong's role in the event:

> Mao's voice was soft, almost lilting, and the effect of his speech was riveting. 'The Chinese People have stood up', he proclaimed, and the crowd went wild, thundering in applause, shouting over and over, 'Long Live the People's Republic of China!' 'Long live the Communist Party of China!' I was so full of joy my heart nearly burst out of my throat, and tears swelled up on my eyes. I was so proud of China, so full of hope, so happy that the exploitation and suffering, the aggression from foreigners, would be gone forever.

After some time back home, Dr. Li learned to attribute to impersonal historical forces all of the personal humiliation that he had suffered. He also learned to attribute to the communist battle with these impersonal forces all of the pride and joy that he felt in Tiananmen in October 1949. Once the Communist Party had been installed in power, Dr. Li recalls, people learned to attribute their shame and their pride to China's battle with "the foreign powers . . . what we later called imperialism." His personal struggle against racism was now subsumed into the greater struggle against that malign force. Hence when the "People" stood up, so did Li Zhisui.

As they unfold, however, Dr. Li's memoirs highlight a mismatch between his personal sense of grievance and pride, and the formulaic prescriptions of communist official ideology. The basic Maoist idea—that foreign capital had allied with domestic feudalism to bring China to its knees—only partly explained the humiliation and indignation people felt as the old empire collapsed about them and the new Republic failed to deliver

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on its promises. While for the moment that explanation sufficed for Dr. Li, in the nature of things it would never be able to explain the humiliation and suffering forced upon the people of China by Mao himself, after the founding of the People's Republic.

Virtually all popular Chinese memoirs published since the Cultural Revolution have been, in one sense or another, chronicles of disappointed expectation. *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* is no exception. Li Zhisui traces a downward spiral of frustration over two decades of service at the inner court of Mao Zedong. He is exceptional, however, in the privileged vantage point from which he observes the personal *as* political. By focusing on the sexual behavior of Mao Zedong, in particular, he exposes a striking incongruence between the depersonalized Maoist language of national pride and longing that first drew him into the service of the Chairman, and the intimately personal experience of shame and humiliation that the Chinese people endured under Mao. As a Chinese abroad, Dr. Li knew from personal experience how it felt to be despised by foreigners. From his time at court, he discovered as a professional functionary among ideologues how it felt to be despised by Marxist-Leninists. It felt much the same.

IN SEARCHING FOR an alternative idiom in which to recount his personal experience, Dr. Li resorts to two widely shared memories of national shame and pride: one of the sign in a Shanghai park, barring "Chinese and dogs", and the other of Mao Zedong announcing that "the Chinese People have stood up." The resilience of these two motifs is all the more remarkable for their having virtually no basis in fact. There *never was* a sign by the entrance to a park in Shanghai that proclaimed "Chinese and dogs not allowed" (or any similar form of words), nor did Mao say that "the Chinese People have stood up" (or any similar form of words) when he declared the founding of the People's Republic.[9] Nevertheless Dr. Li, along with many others in China in recent years, chose to locate his life story between these two historical boundary markers, one of national humiliation and the other of recovered national dignity.

The tenacity of these two literally incorrect, yet psychologically authentic, memories of China's triumph over national humiliation demonstrates the persistence of *thymos* in cultural memory. Beneath the authorized Maoist rhetoric of "imperialism" and "feudalism" is another language that has lain submerged these four or five decades past. This alternative language revolves around issues of humiliation, recognition and dignity, in contrast to the official language of oppression and liberation. Hence in the remembered history of national dignity, "dogs" and "standing up" are misrepresented *together*: the motif of a dog that gets around on four legs is redeemed by the motif of a state that stands up on two.

The idea of China "standing up" in 1949 has many different discursive roots in Chinese literature and ritual practice. The most important source is probably the one that gave us the legendary sign in the park in Shanghai. Basically, when China "stood up" in 1949 it signaled to the world that the country had straightened its back and would no longer tolerate humiliation at the hands of foreigners. In a style characteristic of British municipal administration the world over, there appears to have been a sign listing a number of regulations governing use of the park in the Shanghai International Settlement, including one concerning the entry of dogs, and another dealing with the admission of local Chinese (but permitting entry by Chinese servants of Europeans). The intervening regulations needed to be elided by an editorial stroke of the nationalist imagination to arrive at the condensed statement that dogs and Chinese were forbidden.

[9]See Robert Bickers and Jeffrey Wasserstorm, "Shanghai's 'Dogs and Chinese not Permitted' Sign: Legend, History and Contemporary Symbol", *The China Quarterly* (June 1995).

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It took time before the sign could reveal itself with such elegant simplicity, for the residents of Shanghai had first to learn that their daily routines and personal habits were linked to the welfare of the nation.[10] But once the municipal noticeboard was read as a sign of racial subjection, it stimulated the people of China to get up on their hind legs, or "stand up." Lao She's novel, *Ma and Son* (1929), offers an explicit example of this rhetorical connection:

> In the twentieth century attitudes towards 'people' and 'country' are alike. Citizens of a strong country are people, but citizens of a weak nation? Dogs! China is a weak country, and the Chinese? Right! People of China! You must open your eyes and look around. The time for opening your eyes has come! You must straighten your backs. The time for straightening your backs has come unless you are willing to be regarded as dogs forever!

Lao She concedes the comparison between Chinese and dogs only to turn it back on his countrymen as an injunction to stand up. This connection goes a long way toward explaining the persistence of the mythical Shanghai sign as an historical signpost marking one of the boundaries of modern Chinese political life. It also summons into existence another sign announcing that China has recovered its dignity.

The second of these signs, Mao's famous statement that "the Chinese People have stood up", shows similar evidence of historical tampering. In this case, the tampering serves the added purpose of encoding the personal experience of individual shame and racial humiliation in the language of Marxism-Leninism.

What did Mao actually say at Tiananmen in October 1949? After Lin Boqu, newly appointed secretary of the Council of the People's Government, introduced the Chairman of the People's Republic to the crowd assembled on the square, Mao ascended the podium to announce, "The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China has this day been established" (*Zhonghua renmin gongheguo zhongyang renmin zhengfu yi yu benri chenglile*). He stepped aside while the flag of the People's Republic was raised over Tianan Gate, and then read aloud from a prepared statement on the formal arrangements of government, on key personnel who would take up leading positions in government and military agencies, and on the status of the new government as the sole legitimate government of China for the purpose of diplomatic recognition. Next came the swearing in of numerous state functionaries before the proceedings continued with an impressive military parade. As the ceremony drew to a close, members of the crowd cried out, "Long live the People's Republic of China!" and "Long live Chairman Mao!" Mao responded by raising his hand in acknowledgment and calling back, "Long live Comrades!"

The significance of the event today is far better captured by Dr. Li's capricious recollection than by an accurate record of what was actually said, and he is in good company in misremembering the event. On October 1, 1984, Deng Xiaoping drew a similar connection. "Thirty-five years ago", Deng recalled at an anniversary ceremony in Tiananmen, "Chairman Mao Zedong . . . solemnly proclaimed here the founding of the People's Republic of China. He declared that the Chinese people had finally stood up."[11] Western memories are no more reliable. Harrison Salisbury repeats the same story in *The New Emperors*,[12] and Western video and film records of Mao's speech from the podium

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[10]See my *Awakening China: Politics, Culture and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), chapter 3.

[11]Cited in Richard Evans, *Deng Xiaoping and the Making of Modern China* (New York: Viking, 1994), p. 273.

[12]Salisbury, *The New Emperors: China in the Era of Mao and Deng* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1992), p. 187.

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at Tiananmen invariably carry an English voice-over statement along the lines of "the Chinese People have stood up", over the top of Mao's statement on the establishment of the Central People's Government. Regardless of what Mao in fact said on that day, that is how it has been remembered.

In fact the expression "the Chinese People have stood up" (*Zhongguo renmin zhan qilai le*) dates from the title ascribed to a talk that Mao had delivered a week earlier, to an assembly of old warlords, former bureaucrats, aging literati, "democratic elements", overseas Chinese and delegates drawn from all regions of China, all of whom had gathered to convene the opening session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) on September 21, 1949. Mao's speech on this occasion bore little relation to anything uttered at Tiananmen. Its tone was not faithfully captured by the formal title either. Mao appealed for the unity of the Chinese nation, made a number of gestures to evoke China's heroic and glorious past, and paid due reference to Sun Yatsen's contribution to the national revolution. While he repeated the phrase "stood up" several times in the course of the talk, he refrained from using the Leninist term "people" (*renmin*) in favor of the particularistic "we" (*women*), "nation" or "race" (*minzu*), and "Chinese" (*zhongguoren*). His first reference reads, "The Chinese, who occupy one quarter of humankind, have now stood up." The second refers pointedly to the humiliation of the Chinese at the hands of other nations: "Our nation", Mao assured his audience, "will never again be a nation despised by others. We have stood up." I stress the point because the universal term "people" does not quite catch the sense of racial or national pride conveyed in Mao's address.

This should not perhaps surprise us, given that the speech was targeted not at the "people" but at an aging audience of Republican functionaries, who were long accustomed to mulling over China's lost imperial dignity and recent history of national humiliation. At the same time, Mao's failure to mention these humiliations when he stood before the "people" a week later at Tiananmen was an omission in need of correction. The compound memory of these events, as they are recorded in Mao's collected works, is a curious blend of primordial racial pride and instrumental Leninist reasoning, mixed by an imaginative editor whose contribution to history has passed largely unacknowledged. This contribution involved yolking an earlier language of thymotic racial pride to a new, depersonalized, Marxist language of imperialist oppression and national liberation.

Dr. Li was not alone in imagining that these two languages came together when Mao spoke at Tiananmen. In the years that followed, he was not alone in attributing to "imperialism" the personal humiliation that had been etched on his soul as a youth. Nor was he alone, later still, when he abandoned this official language in favor of a cruder idiom of national humiliation and personal betrayal to portray the private life of Chairman Mao.

Saying No: The Rhetoric of Indignation

THYMOS, FUKUYAMA reminds us, compels us not just to "stand up" and be recognized but also to "say no" to others. The muse of thymotic resentment has been busy in China in recent years. The books that have appeared under variations on the title *China Can Say No*—for example, *China Is Still Capable of Saying No, The China That Can Say No, Why Does China Say No?*—point consistently to the humiliation of the Chinese people at the hands of foreigners. It is only in terms of those humiliations, write the authors of the sequel to *China Can Say No*, that "we can understand why China's writers have been crying out to the heavens for a hundred years now: 'When will China become great and powerful?'" And the answer to that question, it seems, is only when the country finds the courage to stand firm and "say no."

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One notable feature of the genre is the casual displacement of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought by unadorned *ressentiment*. While many of these works refer to Mao's reported statement that "the Chinese People have stood up", they draw little further inspiration from his voluminous speeches and writings. They waste no effort, for example, reiterating the old Maoist explanation for China's historical condition that would attribute blame to international capital or feudal forces of reaction. They offer instead a simple catalogue of grievances set against a crude inventory of recent economic achievements. On the whole, the authors resent the fact that China is not treated with the dignity that they believe it deserves in light of its size, its history and its present rate of economic development.

All the same, Qin Xiaoying reminds us in his foreword to *China Is Still Capable of Saying No* (1996) that Mao's place in history is assured. Many foreigners appear to believe that economic reforms and the opening to the outside world initiated in 1978 marked a clean break with Mao's New China, he continues, but in this they are mistaken. China is simply accelerating its quest for status. Hence the economic reforms of Deng Xiaoping are read as enabling China to rise in the twenty-first century as firmly as it stood up in the middle of the present one:

> As our chief architect, Deng Xiaoping, once pointed out: 'When did the Chinese people stand up in the world? It was in 1949. In years to come, once we have achieved modernization, the Chinese people won't be merely standing up. We'll be flying up!'

In the literature of national humiliation, then, Deng emerges as Mao's equal, because he helped China to straighten its wings and "fly up."

The achievements of Deng's economic reforms are valued for enhancing national self-esteem. "There is no dignity to be had in poverty", complain the authors of one of these books, "no matter what country you come from." If it came to a choice, they would have the country raise its standing in the world before it raised its GDP another percentage point. We tend to assume that the legitimacy of the present regime rests largely on its capacity to deliver the good life to China's citizens. But little respect is shown in China's literature of complaint for a government that would deliver prosperity at the price of national dignity. Its tone confirms one of Fukuyama's stronger statements: "The nationalist is primarily preoccupied not with economic gain, but with recognition and dignity."[13]

The favored metaphor for economic growth—that of stretching one's wings and flying up—is now framed in the idiom of "national self-respect." It is not the "people" who fly up but the Chinese nation. Qin Xiaoying, for example, records that Deng once remarked at a meeting with Richard Nixon that "a country lacking in national self respect [*minzu de zizunxin*] and failing to cherish its own national independence, can never straighten itself up [*li bu qilai*]." Like Li Zhisui's memoirs, the *China Can Say No* books remind us that the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal model of Maoist nationalism overlies an earlier form of nationalism, one grounded in personal experience of racial or national humiliation, rather than general and anodyne recollections of political and economic oppression. Again, like Li Zhisui, the authors inadvertently acknowledge that their loss of dignity has been institutionalized in perpetuity by the Communist Party state.

Neither the party nor the regime is presented with any appreciable sympathy in this literature of complaint. While its "no" is directed explicitly against foreigners, the present government is held implicitly to account for yielding too readily to foreign political and commercial demands, and for surrendering China's national dignity in the process. Even more pertinently, the texts shed light on a

[13]Fukuyama, p. 201.

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parallel struggle for personal dignity within China itself. They demonstrate a significant loss of self-regard among people within China, and reluctantly acknowledge that this loss lies exposed for all the world to see.

Basically, the "say no" authors appear to resent the twist of fate that delivered them into the world as citizens of a state that cannot afford the liberties that citizens of other states take for granted. None concedes that the time is ripe for democracy in China. None questions the wisdom of the armed suppression of democracy activists in 1989. Yet none can draw comfort, either, from the knowledge that they belong to a state that refuses to acknowledge their dignity as individual citizens. By abandoning hope for civil liberties, China's nationalists have discovered *shame*. This appears to be the indirect source for much of the resentment driving the *China Can Say No* phenomenon. It is sired by the anger of a nation not taken at its worth, and the shame of a people who tried to stand up before their own state and discovered that it could not be done.

Life Itself Plays the Master

IN FUKUYAMA'S terms, the popular protests of 1989 were staged to achieve "universal recognition"—that is, to assert the value of the individual citizen before that of the state. Since 1989, state repression has had the effect of redirecting this quest back onto the old and more familiar track of national recognition. This redirection has been effected partly through brute force, partly through censorship and misinformation, but chiefly through the state playing upon a feeling of the inevitability of things that seems to be widely shared by people in China today. The idealism of 1989 has yielded to "realism" today. "Unrealistic hopes of 'universalism' [*tianxia zhuyi*] are no more than wishful thinking", writes the team headed by Song Qiang. The day for cosmopolitanism might dawn in a hundred years, although by Song Qiang's reckoning this, too, may be unduly sanguine. Mao's timetable was more like one thousand years. The Chinese people have a long wait ahead of them before they can realistically expect to enjoy the freedoms that are theirs by right.

Impotence in the face of history means, in Fukuyama's words, that people cannot live up to their own sense of worth. China's nay-sayers seem simultaneously resigned to their fate and frustrated by the circumstances that compel their acquiescence. One way or another, the outcome is a feeling of shame. But nay-sayers are compelled to acquiesce to the "realistic" conditions governing life in their own sovereign state. The Chinese *nation* may have stood up long ago, we are told, but the Chinese *people* remain slaves to this day. They have become "slaves of life", inescapably tied to their families and their children, and bound to their country for want of a passport. Much as they might like to "mount political resistance in Hyde Park" (an indirect reference to Tiananmen), or join the Greens and "save the whales", China's people are for the moment prevented from becoming "citizens of the world." Their servile condition has not been forced on them by the state, nor can it be attributed to foreigners. In this particular master-slave relationship, life itself plays the master. There is no escaping it.

Such admissions hint at the shame of growing up in a society and a state that offer no hope of realizing the simple aspirations of the common citizen. Worse, they hold out no hope of liberation. For "slaves of life", bondage is a condition of existence and not a consequence of the particular arrangements or policies of a given regime.[14] The rhetoric of shame and indignation running through the *Say No* literature suggests that the quest for individual dignity on the part of ordinary citizens is still far from reconciled with the

[14]Geremie R. Barme, "To screw foreigners is patriotic: China's avante-garde nationalists", in *Chinese Nationalism*, ed. Jonathan Unger (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), pp. 183-208.

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quest for national dignity. What little respect people can muster is found by "saying no" to foreigners, in the belief that foreign critics fail to appreciate and make little allowance for the particular conditions that apply in China.

But the claims of national dignity and individual dignity cannot be reconciled by saying no to foreigners alone. National liberation offers no way out for "slaves of life." The path to liberation entails challenging the conditions that threaten personal dignity. This path leads inevitably to challenging head-on existing constraints on thought, speech and assembly.

The "Irrationality" of Wei Jingsheng

FUKUYAMA identifies the passion that drives a people to "stand up" in the world with the longing that drives them to "stand up" for civil rights and democracy. This longing is the desire for recognition, and it is not a rational longing in the standard instrumental or utilitarian sense of the term. In pursuit of recognition, people set aside their better judgment and risk their lives and livelihoods to fight for a nation, for a creed or for the right to be counted the equals of their masters. Developments in the economy and society may enable these sacrifices and struggles to take place, but in the absence of human desire and human agency there is no struggle at all. It takes irrational nationalists to make nations, and irrational democrats to make democracies.

Wei Jingsheng is a democrat in Fukuyama's mold, a "thymotic man", a "man of anger who is jealous of his own dignity and the dignity of his fellow citizens."[15] Wei's critics in China and abroad (and he has many) complain that he is out of touch with the mood of his country. They are right. His routine insistence on maintaining personal dignity before his political leaders, his jailers and his family presents a model of behavior not widely practiced in China today. What is more, he refuses to share the feeling of political impotence that afflicts many of his compatriots, and has avoided the shame that comes of failing to live up to his own expectations.

Fukuyama insists that "there is no democracy without democrats." The case of Wei Jingsheng asks us to carry Fukuyama's line of reasoning a little further, to ask whether there can be *nationalism* without democrats in China today. Is it possible for the people of China to recover national self-regard without first recovering their individual self-esteem through recognition of their universal rights? In other words, is it possible for the Chinese people really to take pride in their nation while they still remain ashamed of themselves?

Wei is proud of his country because he can look himself in the eye. One source of his self-esteem is his refusal to concede a point on which his critics have long yielded: that the people of China deserve less than others. His critics generally concede that democracy is a universal aspiration of people in all societies, including China's, yet for now they place democracy beyond realistic expectations. Democracy is not something to struggle for, his critics assume, but something history delivers to the door when the order is ready. Again, Wei demurs: "Which country has acquired democracy, freedom, and human rights without hard struggle, without shedding sweat and blood? You could not possibly wait for someone to present you with democracy."[16]

Wei Jingsheng is just one of many Chinese citizens who have spent time in jail for speaking their minds. Some have endured considerably longer terms in jail; some have held equally fast to their views. He stands out in this company, however, not simply on account of his international status, but because he has attempted to reconcile the

[15]Fukuyama comments on China: "It is only thymotic man, the man of anger who is jealous of his own dignity and the dignity of his fellow citizens . . . who is willing to walk in front of a tank or confront a line of soldiers", p. 180.

[16]Interview with Wei Jingsheng, *China News Digest*, January 1998.

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claims of national and universal recognition in an old and familiar language that was forged in the country's struggle for national recognition. He is the first to acknowledge the power of national dignity in the armory of his enemies. Indeed, national dignity is a source of inspiration for him as well. He wrote and posted his major essay on democracy, "The Fifth Modernization", to demonstrate to his fellow countrymen that not all Chinese were spineless weaklings. His subject was democracy; his muse was thymotic nationalism.

By his own account, Wei had thought long and hard about the condition of his country and people for many years before the advent of the Democracy Wall Movement. Still, he had no intention of posting anything on these subjects until he overheard bystanders complain that Democracy Wall activists would probably pack up their pens and go home once Deng Xiaoping had issued a veiled warning, which he did on November 27, 1978. Wei took this complaint as a slight on his country and his people, and it stirred him to action:

> As soon as [Deng's] notice was posted, citizens all over Beijing were critical: 'The Chinese are simply inept, and spineless. Look at it, having the freedom only for a couple of days, being able to speak out, now with a little directive from someone, they want to retreat. A bunch of spineless weaklings. (Sigh) There is no hope for China.'
>
> After I heard such commentaries, I was particularly saddened. I felt that not all Chinese were spineless. Certainly my thoughts and my ideas, with years of deliberation, had long been stored in my mind. I decided to utter them, do something, with the primary motivation to prove to everyone that not all Chinese were spineless. So I posted 'The Fifth Modernization' there. It was written one night, and posted there the next day.[17]

Wei thrilled to see people queuing ten deep to read his new poster, and felt reassured when they nodded in agreement. What moved him most was public acknowledgment that the people of China could stand up for their rights. He alludes to this nationalist motive in the opening paragraph of the second section of "The Fifth Modernization", which was pasted up shortly after another writer had urged Wei to stop criticizing the regime. "Our young men are not the 'sick men of the East'", Wei began. "They have sufficient courage to put up and to read posters, and to discuss different views even though some of them are taboo."[18] Everyone, he later recalled, could now acknowledge that "the Chinese were brave and fearless people after all."[19] The language through which he has conveyed this conviction is the same language employed by Mao Zedong in his speech to the CPPCC, when he proclaimed, "Our nation will never again be a nation despised by others. We have stood up." Now, however, the nation was asked to stiffen its spine *against* Mao's Communist Party itself.

These few references to national dignity stand out in a body of work otherwise devoted to the dignity of the individual. In "The Fifth Modernization", Wei mounted his argument for democracy around the implicitly Hegelian framework of the master-slave relationship. People everywhere wanted democracy in order to become "masters of their own destiny", Wei asserted. In China, however, "it may be more correct to call them slaves." A people that could not maintain its autonomy was forced into servitude.

Wei scorned apologists who argued that the regime had fed and clothed the Chinese people. First, they were plainly wrong: Mao had systematically starved the people in his Great Leap Forward. Impoverished and ill-

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[17]Interview with Wei Jingsheng, *China News Digest*, February 15, 1998.

[18]Wei Jingsheng, "The Fifth Modernization", in *The Fifth Modernization: China's Human Rights Movement, 1978-1979*, ed. James D. Seymour (Stanfordville, NY: Human Rights Publishing Group, 1980), pp. 47-70, 56.

[19]Interview of February 15, 1998.

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fed people had every reason to feel angry when they saw their masters gorging on fluffy white rice. What caused gravest offense in Wei's eyes, however, was the servitude that their hunger revealed in their relations with their masters, who denied them the simple right "to lead a normal life." Bowls of white rice represented more than the promise of a full stomach. They whetted the appetite for equality between slave and master. The heroes of the centuries-old epic *Water Margin* rarely went hungry, Wei observed, but they fought and struggled with their masters all the same. So they should. Their struggle was identical to his own: "exactly the kind of struggle aimed at winning equality of rights for man as a human being." The bravery and bravado of the *Water Margin* heroes has served as a model for many different kinds of rebellion in China's modern history, not all by any means undertaken in pursuit of human rights. For Wei, however, these heroic tales signified the historical continuity of the political struggle of the Chinese people's desire for recognition.[20]

In his letters from prison, Wei refuses to concede the shameful inevitability of being born into a state that will not grant him recognition as an autonomous human being. Even after it takes away his freedom, he refuses to kneel. The simple audacity of this refusal can be measured by the scale across which Wei pitches his complaints from prison, ranging from self-confident letters to Deng Xiaoping through to the studied naivety of brief notes to his jailers complaining about the fittings and facilities of his prison cell.

To some, such behavior suggests madness, and in fact Wei feigns madness. In his childhood, he recalls, Wei and his sister used to play the roles of legendary "mad geniuses" of folklore, to flaunt local customs and criticize national political figures with impunity. He learned at an early age that the mad enjoy a degree of licence that is denied sane people. He hints at another source of his irrational behavior in one of his asides on the people of China: "The people have great reserves of self-confidence, self-respect, and self-consciousness stored away." The source of both his madness and his confidence is Wei's self-respect.

INDIVIDUAL SELF-RESPECT is a sturdy foundation on which to claim national respect. This is not, however, how the relationship between democracy and nationalism is generally understood in China today. As Edward Friedman has recently observed, "Recent events have fostered a feeling among many educated Chinese that promoting democracy is virtually synonymous with treason, with splintering China and blocking its rise and return to greatness."[21] It is worth recalling that Wei Jingsheng was initially jailed for selling state secrets, not for democratic activism. Since his release from prison in November 1997, he has again been branded a national traitor for speaking out against continuing civil rights abuses in China. Far from constituting treason, Wei's behavior demonstrates that the fight for individual dignity is a powerful antidote to the shame and self-loathing that converts national pride into parochial chauvinism in China today.

Others among Wei's critics are prepared to concede the inevitability of democracy, although on economistic grounds rather than thymotic ones. There is no place for dignity or democrats in their divinations. Democracy will simply arrive, under its own steam, once the elite responsible for the ship of state finally acknowledge its practical advantages. Wei

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[20]The *Water Margin* epic is the *locus classicus* of China's many tales of popular rebellion found in the democratic literary canon. Only a few years before Wei's poster was mounted on Democracy Wall, in 1975 and 1976, *Water Margin* had been the focus of an orchestrated political campaign. See my "Continuity within discontinuity: The case of *Water Margin* mythology", *Modern China* (July 1986).

[21]Friedman, "Thoughts on Wei Jingsheng", H-ASIA, January 24, 1998.

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places little faith in any newly emerging bureaucratic "bourgeoisie." The major beneficiary of market-driven economic reforms, he says, has been a new bureaucratic class "cultivated intentionally and systematically by the Communist Party", one that has no interest in democratic reform. Ordinary people will fight and die for democracy, he maintains, not because they are growing rich but because they no longer wish to be treated as slaves. It follows that democracy can only come to China through an economically irrational and politically naive choice on the part of aggrieved citizens who want the state to recognize their dignity as ordinary human beings.

So the *ressentiment* that pushed China to "stand up" in 1949 now drives the struggle for liberal democracy. Nationalist *ressentiment* is of course still alive and well—the ideal of national dignity drives the literature of *Saying No*. Yet the nay-sayers themselves highlight a growing incongruence between national pride and personal indignation when they boast of China's long and glorious history in an angry and grumpy tone. The incongruence arises in part because the problem lies closer to home than many will concede. Hence, the more indignant they become, the more China's "say no" nationalists are likely to inflame the desire to restore some balance, or symmetry, between individual and national dignity. More importantly, the incongruence arises because personal indignation can no longer be mollified by China "standing up" in the same old fashion. The solution also lies closer to home.

People in China increasingly acknowledge that the world has become reluctant to recognize states that treat their citizens with derision—and there is no dignity without recognition. As Hegel observed, it takes two subjects to turn a slave into a master: one to stand up, and the other to witness and acknowledge the standing up. Even if China manages to "fly up" in the twenty-first century, as the nay-sayers predict, the world is unlikely to extend it full recognition until the Chinese citizen is allowed to stand up as well.

When all is said and done, however, the world is a relatively minor witness to China's predicament. An old and familiar vocabulary of national rights, national self-determination and national equality continues to supply a framework for personal reflection by Chinese themselves on individual rights, individual self-determination and equality before the law—all grounded in the pursuit of recognition. People who can say no to foreigners can, of course, eventually learn to say no to anyone they choose. True, when they resort to thymotic resistance to the state or try to appeal to their formal rights before the state, they risk landing themselves in jail. "Sensible", rational people do not expose themselves to such risks. Unless they do, however, they run the greater risk of surrendering their dignity. Many people in China are acutely aware of this dilemma.

Wei Jingsheng has pressed on, regardless of the risks, because he places dignity first. The fight for democracy is not a fight for comfort, or for happiness, or for profit, as Wei understands it, but a struggle to retain one's sense of self-worth. Asked recently how he managed to survive his seventeen years in prison, he answered, "For your own dignity, you have to endure. . . . For people like us, death was not the outcome we feared most. What we feared most of all was the possibility of developing a mental disorder, of losing our dignity—that would have been the worst outcome." □

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Tocqueville and the Odd Couple

A Review of Franco-German Relations

Max Beloff

ALEXIS de Tocqueville, known throughout Europe as the author of *Democracy in America* and for a brief period foreign minister of France, was childless—a matter of deep concern to someone so proud of his ancestry. In his later years he partly made up for this gap in his life by attention to his nephews and nieces. Pride of place went to his nephew Hubert, who was nineteen years old when Louis Napoleon's coup d'état ended Tocqueville's public career.[1] After some hesitation, Hubert opted for a diplomatic career and, with some assistance from his uncle, was posted first to the embassy in Vienna and then to Berlin.

At both capitals, but particularly Berlin, Tocqueville's contacts, whether personal or through correspondence, assured the young man an entrée into the most important social and intellectual circles. In writing to Hubert, Tocqueville welcomed the latter's determination to pursue the study of the German language and the history of the German-speaking peoples.[2] While the Bismarckian Reich was still in the future, the German confederation was already the scene of important economic and demographic growth, and, despite the setback to its unity in the failed Revolutions of 1848, was obviously destined to play an increasingly important role in European politics. Tocqueville believed that the Germans should have been the natural partners of the French but that the Napoleonic conquests and occupation had permanently alienated them and made an alliance impossible. This legacy left France with the option of choosing an alignment with Britain, of which the price would be allowing that country to expand into all quarters of the habitable world, or else with Russia, which always carried with it the risk of general war.[3]

Tocqueville was aware of the paradox in his own position as between Britain and Germany. As he himself admitted, he had always lived almost exclusively in an English world.[4] Indeed some of his early contacts with German thinking had been by way of English intermediaries. In these last years of his life he

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[1]New material on these aspects of Tocqueville's life is contained in *Correspondence Familiale* (Paris: Gallimard, 1998), vol. XIV, the latest volume of Gallimard's ongoing publication of the *Oeuvres Complètes.*

[2]Tocqueville was conscious of his own deficiency in respect of the German language. When he visited Germany for archival research in 1854 he relied on the help of his wife, the Englishwoman Mary Mottley, who was an accomplished linguist.

[3]Tocqueville to Hubert, Feb. 7, 1858, *Correspondence Familiale*, pp. 341-3.

[4]Tocqueville to Christian von Bunsen, Jan. 2, 1853, in *Correspondence Etrangère d'Alexis de Tocqueville* (vol. VII of the *Oeuvres Complètes*), pp. 328-9.

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was dominated by the studies needed to complete his projected history of the French Revolution, which he regarded as a European event and one for which an understanding of the German reactions to events in France was essential.[5]

He also saw in parts of Germany where the spirit of Metternich still ruled an approximation to the social and legal structures of pre-Revolutionary Europe. For that reason he saw Prussia, where the ideas of the liberal Enlightenment had made the greatest impact, as holding the key to a liberal future for Germany as a whole. In the later 1850s there seemed to be signs of a progressive liberalization of Prussia, which was very welcome to him. His fear was that the forces of progress would be too impatient and try to reach too soon the creation of a stable constitutional monarchy, which the English model showed to be the fruit of generations.[6] What Tocqueville hoped for was a friendly Germany modeled on Britain. But in 1862, three years after Tocqueville's death, Bismarck became head of the Prussian government and henceforth events followed a very different course.

The creation of the new German empire was one of the fruits of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71—the first of what some would see as the three Franco-German wars that formed much of the substance of European history between that date and 1945. Throughout that period and subsequently the passionate interest that Tocqueville had shown in German internal developments, and above all in German thought, has remained a permanent feature of French intellectual society. The point has been well made by Theodore Zeldin, the leading British authority on modern French history:

> France's involvement with Germany manifested itself in a love-hate relationship which continually tormented and frustrated Frenchmen. If France was married to any country it was to Germany. . . . The French interest in England was, by comparison, not much more than a flirtation or an affair. But Franco-German relations reveal best of all the complexity of France's position in Europe. This is a particularly striking case in which the study of these relations in purely diplomatic terms gives a positively misleading picture of what went on in the minds of people outside the political arena. Germany was the land of Kant, Goethe, Wagner, Marx and Nietzsche to more people than it was that of Bismarck and Hitler.[7]

The main factor on the political side of the relationship until the First World War was the memory and consequences of the Franco-Prussian War.[8] From Bismarck's point of view this war showed once again that France, with its record of instability and external aggression since the Revolution, must be deprived of some of the territory from which expansion could be launched. But the strategic reasons for the annexation of Alsace and part of Lorraine were fortified by the view of all the German political parties that these provinces were a part of German-speaking territory that would have to be included in any complete German State. Since France could not be expected to accept this situation as permanent, it would be the task of German diplomacy to keep it isolated and divert its energies to overseas expansion, which would bring it into constant rivalry with Britain and Italy.

French policy, particularly under governments of the Right, did in fact seek the possibility of turning the tables, notably by the

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[5]Tocqueville to Charles Monnard, October 15, 1856, *Correspondence Etrangère*, pp. 353-7. Notes on his study of German sources are printed in Part II of *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (vol. II of the *Oeuvres Complètes*).

[6]Tocqueville to Christian von Bunsen, December 25, 1858, *Correspondence Etrangère*, pp. 365-7.

[7]Zeldin, *France, 1848-1945: Intellect, Taste, and Anxiety*, vol. II (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 113.

[8]For the origins, conduct and consequences of the war, see Michael Howard, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Invasion of France* (London: Methuen, 1981).

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conclusion of a Russian alliance.[9] The Left did however from time to time produce spokesmen who sought to end hostility toward Germany and bring about some kind of détente. The conduct of German policy under Wilhelm II put an end to these hopes.

THE WAR OF 1914-18, with its horrific losses and the German occupation of French soil, made any immediate thought of rèconciliation hard to sustain outside limited pacifist circles. It put into power Georges Clemenceau, for whom the mere recovery of the lost provinces was insufficient compensation for France's sufferings and an inadequate guarantee against future German aggression. The position he took at the Paris Peace Conference, and which was maintained by his successors in the 1920s, was that Germany must be disarmed, obliged to remedy some of the losses inflicted on French industry by the payment of reparations, and the enforcement of the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles through the presence of French troops of occupation. Some Frenchmen went further and hoped that some areas bordering on France might be detached from the German State.

Nevertheless, it remained the case that in any direct conflict between France and Germany, the weight of advantage in demographic and industrial terms would lie with Germany. While the Russian alliance had proved its usefulness to France early in the war, the Bolshevik Revolution had for the time being removed it from the European balance, and the resuscitated Polish State was an insufficient substitute. In the end it was the Anglo-Saxon world that had enabled France to emerge victorious, and it was upon the consent of Britain and the United States that any French policy must in future depend. Since it was clear that neither country believed the permanent subordination of Germany to be feasible in the long run, alternatives had to be considered.

With the advent of German governments prepared to fulfill their treaty obligations—at least on the surface—the old wish for some kind of rapprochement began again to carry weight on the French Left, under the guidance of men like Briand and Herriot. With the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 it looked as though this objective might be within reach. Security remained a French preoccupation and, since the League of Nations was not thought to be in a position to provide it, some kind of European structure began to look attractive. It is in these years that the origins of the European Union must be sought.[10]

The world economic crisis that began in the following year put an end to such hopes for the time being. It helped to precipitate the rise of National Socialism, and the faltering efforts of the Disarmament Conference could not survive the advent of Hitler. A Germany free to expand its armed forces and prepared to channel its scientific and industrial might to military ends was more than a match for anything the French could do. Once again French policy could only balance between the search for allies prepared to assist in containing Germany and what became known as "appeasement." The fact that the strength of Russia, now the Soviet Union, was uncertain, and that its ideology was anathema to much of French opinion, helps to explain the inability of the French as well as the British to find a solution to the problem with which German ambitions now confronted them.

THE SECOND World War (or the third Franco-German war) was an even more disastrous experience than its predecessor. In 1940 the possibility of fighting on from the French empire was embodied in the proposed Anglo-French Union, but by this time it was too late to stem the forces of

[9]For a discussion of the role of the Franco-Russian alliance of 1894, see George F. Kennan, *The Fateful Alliance: France, Russia and the Coming of the First World War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).

[10]See my article "The Once and Future Europe" in *The National Interest* (Winter 1991/92).

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defeatism.[11] France was now divided between those like General de Gaulle and the internal leaders of the Resistance who still hoped for a turning of the tide, and the new "Vichy" government, symbolized by Marshal Pétain, which saw an alternative future in accepting the role of a partner to the new German Reich. The history of the Vichy period is still the subject of controversy in France. Without probing too deeply into these painful memories, two points must be made of direct relevance to later developments. Traditionally, the search for friendship with Germany has been a feature of part of the French Left. From the "appeasement" years and during the Vichy period it had become part of the thinking of a portion of the French Right. The second point to notice is that those who supported cooperation with Nazi Germany were divided as to how far that cooperation needed to go. Should it be as limited as possible and justified as the only way in which a French State could be preserved? Or was it better to go the whole way and seek to give assistance to the German war effort, particularly after this became directed against the Soviet Union from the summer of 1941?

Once the United States entered the war in December 1941, the alternative to subordination to Germany was "liberation" by the Anglo-Saxons. In that case, France would become dependent for its renewal upon the Americans, and President Roosevelt's treatment of General de Gaulle and his movement suggested that this also would carry some disadvantages. Would France again have to choose, as in Tocqueville's time, between Germany and the English-speaking world as the alternative poles of its foreign policy? The agonies involved in such a choice were to confront the Fourth Republic, de Gaulle himself on his return to power, and the Fifth Republic down to the present time, although in very different contexts.

Again one is confronted with the cultural dimension. Admiration for German culture among the French elites was matched by their suspicion of American mores as reflected in its popular culture, which has increasingly appealed to younger generations of Europeans. Just as Britain cannot enter wholeheartedly into any European Union project because it feels itself far closer to the United States, so the French find a "European" rather than an "Atlanticist" ideology more acceptable.

While the relative positions of the Powers after Germany's defeat in 1945 made it impossible for the French to achieve the old objective of breaking up the unity of the German State and going back to the "many Germanies" of the past, the Soviet occupation of East Germany achieved it for them and the old Reich was not in fact restored. The difference in weight between France and Germany was thus reduced and the way was open for an experiment in partnership, based at first on the European Coal and Steel Community with its joint management of the ultimate sinews of war.

Some historians with an ideological bent would see the period since 1950 as marked by the creation of new European institutions, culminating in the European Union of Maastricht. Those of a more pragmatic turn of mind would prefer to place the emphasis on the development of Franco-German relations, espoused by the Germans—Adenauer and his successors—as a way back into the community of nations, and by the French in the belief that their own political and administrative skills, their permanent seat on the UN Security Council, and their developing nuclear power would be sufficient to ensure that the policies of the new institutions would reflect French priorities.

THE SMOOTH progression of the Bonn-Paris axis was given a jolt when the Soviet empire collapsed and the reunification of Germany proved one of the unavoidable results of its demise. The transformation of the Bonn-Paris axis to the Berlin-Paris axis raises new problems, since at the

[11] See "The Anglo-French Union Project of 1940" in my *The Intellectual in Politics and Other Essays* (New York: Library Press, 1971).

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same time the Soviet collapse made possible the revival of French interest in Central and Eastern Europe where the Germans would once again be powerful competitors. During the Bonn period the Germans had also differed from the French in their feeling of dependence upon the United States. It was the task of the West German rulers to combine Europeanism with Atlanticism to a greater extent than the French thought necessary. With the disappearance—at least for the time being—of a threat from the east, the Germans were able to envisage a European destiny more in keeping with the French vision. It has been the determination of the two countries to crown the European edifice with a single currency, and with the federal institutions that its operation demands, that has explained, and indeed dominated, the course of European development since Maastricht. Quite apart from issues of policy—military as well as economic—there does seem to have been over the period since 1950 a coming together of the ruling cadres in both countries. It has become natural that Paris should be the first port of call for any German statesman or official exploring a new initiative or a new problem.

Questions as to the durability of this axis have been raised by the political changes of the last couple of years, which have seen the eclipse of the "Catholic Democracy"—so powerful at the inauguration of the new "Europe"—by governments of a socialist complexion in all the major countries of the Union. There were signs in particular that the new German Chancellor Schröder, having his political roots in a Protestant north Germany with its partially maritime outlook, might try to give a greater role to Britain in Europe's affairs, and there was even talk of a Berlin-London-Paris triangle in place of the exclusive Franco-German partnership.

But once Schröder was actually in office, these expectations were shown to be illusory. The pattern of exclusivity has reasserted itself and the Franco-German alignment seems as pronounced as ever. Since the main differences so far evident are over the constitution and functioning of the European Central Bank, discussions from which Britain has excluded itself, it was obvious that their resolution would depend upon the ability of the Germans and the French to come to an agreement between themselves.

AS WE HAVE seen, Tocqueville was unable correctly to guess the future course that Germany would take. In a world and even a Europe undergoing such rapid change, forecasting now would be equally perilous. What we do know is that Germany is now run by a new generation that is unimpeded by the burden of the Nazi legacy and that appears willing to look at issues from the point of view of the national interest. Where such considerations will take them in relation to the expansion of the European Union and of NATO, or in respect of "out-of-area" issues from which Germany has hitherto held aloof, it is not possible to say. On the French side, there are fewer signs of fundamental change despite the major recasting of its armed forces. One and a half centuries after Tocqueville, the wise uncle of a fledgling French diplomat might still give his nephew the same advice: Get to know Germany. □

Advice to Budding Statesmen

O what a tangled web we weave
When first we practise to deceive!
But when we've practised quite a while
How vastly we improve our style!

—J.R. Pope

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Greece: Like Any Other European Country?

Loukas Tsoukalis

IN THE EARLY 1990s, it became fashionable to portray Greece as an awkward partner or indeed a black sheep in the European Union: an economic laggard, falling behind in the European income league, with large budget deficits and double-digit inflation, who also acted in a particularly uncooperative manner in the attempts made by its Western allies to stabilize the Balkan region. This followed a decade of economic mismanagement and rhetorical outbursts in the area of foreign policy, coupled with the habit of adding dissenting footnotes to joint communiqués issued by the European Community (as it was still called at the time) and NATO.

For those who use the term "Balkans" in a pejorative fashion, Greece was behaving like a Balkan country in the EU, adding to the problem instead of trying to be part of the solution in a notoriously unstable and conflict-ridden region. And then came Samuel Huntington, who argued that the clash of civilizations was bound to replace the struggle between liberal democracy and communist totalitarianism, and who then proceeded to identify the major fault lines cutting across the European continent.[1] Greece found itself on the wrong side of Huntington's map, because of its Orthodox tradition, not to mention several centuries spent under Ottoman rule. It all made sense, of course; and it was therefore utterly predictable.

The situation has, however, changed substantially in recent years. Greece is now receiving praise from European and American political leaders and journalists for its moderation in the foreign policy field, and its cooperative stance in dealing with the internal crisis in Albania, the problem of Kosovo, and the non-deployment of the S-300 missiles on the divided island of Cyprus. As well, the improvement registered since 1993 in the main macroeconomic indicators has been impressive, and has been confirmed by the vote of confidence cast in financial markets. The Athens stock exchange has reached unprecedented heights, registering one of the largest increases among European bourses in 1998, while the drachma has been trading at several percentage points above its central rate since it was admitted to the European Exchange Rate Mechanism in March 1998. At long last, Greece seems to be making a successful transition from the status of an emerging market to that of a mature economy, and the bets are heavily on Greece's admission to the European Monetary Union by the year 2001. Even domestic politics have become less polarized and personalized—and perhaps verging on the boring for the taste of some Greeks, used to charismatic leaders and interminable fights between the good and the evil.

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[1]See Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?", *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1993).

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Change and Continuity

THIS APPARENT transformation from black sheep to a more ordinary member of the European herd invites a closer look at the kind of change that Greece has undergone over a longer period. During the last quarter of the century, the country has been faced with three major challenges: the transition to democracy, after the fall of the military dictatorship in 1974; the adjustment to EC/EU membership since 1981; and the creation of a new political (dis)order in its northern neighborhood, following the collapse of communist regimes and the bloody disintegration of Yugoslavia. Greece has coped with those challenges at varying rates of speed and with varying degrees of success.

Let us start with the good news. There has been undoubtedly a remarkable consolidation of parliamentary democracy.[2] The fact that this is now taken completely for granted is a sure sign of the tremendous progress achieved since 1974. The dictatorship had lasted for seven years and was usually regarded as one more episode in the highly unstable history of modern Greece to that date. The consolidation of democracy has been accompanied by a major change in the constitutional order, including the abolition of the monarchy—on the basis of a clear majority expressed in a referendum—and the incorporation of large groups of society into the political system, groups that hitherto had been excluded through a variety of mostly informal measures in the aftermath of the civil war that ended in 1949. Consolidation has also been accompanied by a very substantial redistribution of income between different social groups, and between city and countryside. In more recent years, democratic Greece has had the problem of coping with a large influx of economic and political refugees from its neighboring countries and farther afield, without experiencing the ugliness of organized forms of racism and xenophobia.

The ability of the new democratic system to absorb these changes more or less successfully is an unmistakable sign of its resilience. Political parties have succeeded each other in power in a smooth fashion, institutions are broadly respected, and the system of checks and balances functions reasonably well. By the standards of the region, including the countries under communist rule until 1989 as well as Turkey with its own peculiar version of "guided democracy", Greece is a model case of political stability and functioning democratic institutions. Its successful transition to and consolidation of parliamentary democracy has many parallels with the experience of Spain and Portugal.[3]

Now comes the bad news. The quality of democracy in Greece, although unprecedented in the modern history of the country, still leaves many things to be desired. The main weakness lies in the combination of an overblown state and a relatively underdeveloped civil society. The Greek state is both omnipresent and fundamentally weak. Its pervasive influence has been intimately linked to the functioning of a clientele system that it has been precisely intended to serve. On the other hand, state institutions are inflexible and inefficient in performing the traditional Weberian functions. Dimitri Sotiropoulos has aptly described the Greek state as a "colossus with feet of clay."[4] The pressure for change has been mounting. Membership of the EU constitutes a powerful factor pushing for change, and so does Greece's exposure to international competition.

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[2]See Nikiforos Diamantouros, "Greek Politics & Society in the 1990s", in Graham T. Allison and Kalypso Nicolaïdis, *The Greek Paradox: Promise vs. Performance* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997).

[3]See José Maria Maravall, *Regimes, Politics and Markets: Democratization and Economic Change in Southern and Eastern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[4]See Sotiropoulos, "A Colossus with Feet of Clay: The State in Post-Authoritarian Greece", in *Greece, the New Europe and the Changing International Order*, ed. Harry G. Psomiadis and Stavros Thomadakis (New York: Pella Publishing, 1993).

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Instead of catering to particularistic interests and the perpetuation of the clientele system, Greece needs state institutions that provide stable and transparent rules of the game, flexible regulation of markets, monetary stability, the promotion and management of economic change, and, last but not least, flexible mechanisms of social solidarity. Such institutions it certainly does not have at present. Administrative reform remains the most important and urgent task—a task from which parties in power have tended to shy away, because the gains associated with such reform would take a long time to materialize while the costs would have to be paid more or less immediately.

In a country where politics has been about anything and everything, and where political parties—either directly or through state institutions—try to exercise control over everything from admission to hospitals to the running of universities and sports, civil society has remained underdeveloped. The quality of democracy in Greece largely depends on the strengthening of independent groups and associations of citizens, which can act as effective controls on the all-expansive tendencies of the state. The relatively recent mushrooming of citizens' movements, mainly concerned with environmental and human rights issues, is therefore a most encouraging sign.

Learning to Fit In

THE European Union is now much more than the incomplete common market it had been for many years. Yet European construction is still very much about economics in the wider sense—"low politics" perhaps in classic international relations jargon, but the bread and butter of political life in contemporary democratic societies. European economic integration encompasses three processes: the opening (and regulation) of the internal market for goods, services, persons and capital; the redistribution of resources, mainly through structural policies; and now economic and monetary union (EMU).[5]

Accession to the EC/EU has meant for Greece a radical change in the relationship between the state and the market. The country has had a long history of high external protection and extensive state intervention in the economy, usually arbitrary and non-transparent, and directly linked to the operation of the clientele system. As a member of the Union, Greece has been forced to adjust to open and highly competitive markets, and also to the requirements of joint rule-setting in Brussels. With the deepening and widening of the process of European integration, the scope of joint rules and externally imposed constraints has been greatly extended, now covering not only different barriers to entry into the domestic market but also inflation, budget deficits and interest rates. In other words, economic sovereignty in the context of the EU has become a relative concept.

Greece experienced considerable difficulties in adjusting to this new economic reality, much more so than the two Iberian countries that joined a few years later. Its maladjustment, which lasted for several years, at least partly explains the tensions that developed between it and both European institutions and partner countries.[6] Greece often asked for exceptions in order to protect its domestic producers; either deliberately or because of administrative inefficiency it was slow in implementing European directives and regulations, and it was some-

[5]See my *The New European Economy Revisited* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[6]Several works exist on the difficulties of Greece's adjustment to EU membership. See, for example, Kevin Featherstone and Kostas Ifantis, *Greece in a Changing Europe: Between European Integration and Balkan Disintegration?* (Manchester, NY: Manchester University Press, 1996); Panos Kazakos and P.C. Ioakimidis, *Greece and EC Membership Evaluated* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1994); and my "Greece in the EU: Domestic Reform Coalitions, External Constraints and High Politics", in Achilleas Mitsos and Elias Mossialos, eds., *Contemporary Greece and Europe* (London: Ashgate Press, 1999).

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times accused of wasting the money allocated to it through EU structural policies. In the meantime, trade deficits kept on growing, financed in part through EU transfers. Macroeconomic instability characterized Greece for many years. Tracking the process of compliance with the so-called convergence criteria set out in the Maastricht treaty, the admission ticket to the final stage of EMU, statisticians of the Union had to add little inserts to their graphs on inflation rates, budget deficits and interest rates in order to accomodate Greece, whose figures were for several years way above those of any other EU country.

THIS DIFFICULTY in adjusting to EU membership—and international competition as well—requires some explanation. Of course, the challenge facing Greece was a formidable one, given its relatively low level of economic development compared to that of its new partners and its long history of protection of domestic producers. Adjustment to EU membership was bound to create winners and losers inside the country; and the experience until now suggests that losers (or potential losers) were numerous—and that some of them were politically powerful. An incomplete list of losers from adjustment to EU membership would include a significant part of Greek business, accustomed to protection from external competition and heavily dependent on state favoritism, especially through public procurement contracts. It would also include most of organized labor, especially in a large state-controlled sector of the economy characterized by over-employment, relatively high pay and low productivity. And it would certainly include many politicians whose survival depends on the clientele system that flourishes in protected markets and under non-transparent rules. The list would also include other less well-organized groups of society, such as many small businesses and the lesser skilled. Unable to adjust to a very competitive environment, but also unable to offer effective political resistance, they are, unavoidably, being sacrificed on the altar of economic restructuring.

Faced with such a situation, Greek governments tried for more than ten years to avoid or simply postpone adjustment. At the same time, they showed great readiness to throw money at any group of society able to make enough noise around the issue. In the process they created another category of losers, one that conveniently happened to be disenfranchised because of age. By that I mean the younger generations in the country who will have to bear the full burden of delayed adjustment, not to mention the burden of servicing the large public debt accumulated during the 1980s.

The turning point came around 1993, when Greece entered a phase of economic stabilization and convergence with the rest of the EU, coupled with a more determined and much delayed effort at privatization and restructuring. Previous attempts in this direction had proved short-lived; but the margin of maneuver has become progressively narrower with time. The prospect of economic marginalization in the context of the EU, the rapidly rising cost of servicing the accumulated debt, and the increasing difficulties in the financing of deficits left Greek governments with very limited options. In the meantime, Greek society (or at least a substantial part of it) had learned a lesson in economics the hard way.

This new phase has been characterized until now by a substantial improvement in terms of economic growth. Inflation and budget deficits have registered a sharp decline, thus rapidly converging toward the EU average. This convergence finally led to Greece's admission to the European Exchange Rate Mechanism in March 1998, an event accompanied by a modest devaluation of the drachma. By the time of writing the drachma had recovered more than half of its earlier devaluation. Despite the remarkable progress achieved in terms of macroeconomic stabilization, Greece failed to be admitted to EMU on the basis of the 1997 figures. According to the Greek convergence plan approved by the EU Council of Economic and Finance Ministers, the country should be able to satisfy the crite-

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ria for admission by the end of this year, which would allow Greece to enter the euro-zone in 2001; and the financial markets are apparently betting heavily on its success.

Joining the European Monetary Union constitutes the first economic and political priority of the PASOK government led by Prime Minister Simitis, who was elected by his fellow Socialists to succeed Andreas Papandreou, and then proceeded to win the 1996 elections. This priority is also endorsed by the main opposition party of New Democracy now led by Mr. Karamanlis, a nephew of the other Karamanlis who had dominated Greek politics for much of the postwar period. The two biggest parties in Greece represent approximately 80 percent of the votes. Only two small parties on the Left of the political spectrum, including the unreformed Communist Party, have adopted a negative stance on EMU.

The popularity of Greece's membership of EMU has been repeatedly confirmed by large majorities in opinion polls, even though every Greek in favor of EMU would not necessarily be prepared to pay the price associated with membership. Such support is easy to explain. The search for a collective shield against the enormous instability of exchange markets is coupled with the fear of the political marginalization that would follow should Greece be left out for very long of the most important part of the European construction. And experience suggests that monetary stability would be more effectively guaranteed if responsibility for decisions in the area of monetary policy were to be transferred to the European Central Bank in Frankfurt.

Assuming that the very recent mishandling of the Ocalan affair does not develop into a full-blown crisis for the government, Greek politics in the next few months should revolve around the target of EMU membership, which, if accomplished, will serve as a psychological boost as well as a sure sign that, having erred for several years in the economic wilderness, Greece is coming back into the fold. But it will be one thing to secure membership of EMU, and another to ensure that the Greek economy performs well in this new environment. Greece has entered a long and difficult phase of structural reform, including cutting the state-controlled sector of the economy down to size, overhauling the social security system, and adjusting Greek public administration to the rapidly shifting reality of European integration and globalization. There is still a long distance to travel in this direction.

Many people, including most notably Mr. Simitis, refer to the task as that of "modernizing" Greece. This term is open to many different definitions. If by modernization—or simply reform, as a less heavily loaded term—we understand the process by which Greece can adjust to a rapidly changing European and international environment, it is interesting to observe that the dividing line between reformists/modernizers on the one hand and conservatives/populists on the other cuts right across the two main political parties in Greece.[7] The Socialists, under the leadership of Mr. Simitis, have taken the lead in this process; but he faces strong opposition both inside his own party and from various organized interest groups. The main opposition party adopts a more populist stance, as is natural for parties out of power, especially in Greece where the legacy left by Papandreou is still strong. New Democracy, like PASOK, has brought under the same umbrella a collection of modernizers, technocrats and demagogues.

Will this eventually lead to the realignment of political forces and the creation of new political parties? Until now, the two main parties have shown much resilience. Defectors have usually been punished by the electorate, while attempts to create new parties have fared badly, with the exception of DIKKI, a small party that appeals to former voters of PASOK dissatisfied with the shift to the center-left. On the other hand, both the Communist

[7]See my "Beyond the Greek Paradox" in Allison and Nicolaïdis, *The Greek Paradox*.

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Party and the coalition of former Euro-communists have remained close to the 3 percent barrier below which admission to the national parliament is denied.

In times when ideological differences are not always easy to discern and the range of political choices becomes rather narrow, there is a big risk of vacuous talk and populist rhetoric; and there is no shortage of candidates to perform those functions in any part of the world. Has the time for coalition governments come in a country where the few previous experiments of the kind have been very unsuccessful? And what will be the role of civil society as the state gradually adjusts to EU membership and globalization? In this transition phase, any attempt to provide answers to those questions becomes a hazardous exercise.

Surviving in the Balkans

IF IN ECONOMIC and political terms Greece is gradually becoming like any other European country, this is certainly not true of foreign policy. The reason is simple: the Greeks live in the rough neighborhood of the Balkans, where nation-states have a relatively short history, national frontiers are not generally considered sacrosanct, and ethnic minorities are frequently manipulated in order to destabilize neighbors and thus lay claims on a possible future redrawing of political maps.

The collapse of the old communist order on Greece's northern frontier may have opened the way for the establishment of democratic regimes. But its first effect has been to unleash the old nationalist (and irredentist) forces that had been kept in deep freeze during the Cold War. Thus, several communist leaders (Milosevic certainly not being alone in this respect) have decided to don the nationalist cloak in order to survive politically. This new environment has presented Greece with many problems and risks, but also with new opportunities.[8] In the early years, it tended to exaggerate the former and ignore the latter.

There have been, of course, real problems. The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the civil war that broke out in several parts of its territory, the breakdown of law and order in Albania, the rapid deterioration of economic conditions in all the former communist countries of the region—all these have had important negative consequences for Greece. Transport links with its trading partners in the EU have suffered badly; illegal immigrants in Greece now represent more than 5 percent of the total population of a country that had been for long a net exporter of people; and the Greek armed forces have had to remain pretty well constantly on alert.

At the same time, the Greek political class—a few notable exceptions apart— became obsessed with the name of what is still officially called the Former Yugoslav Republic (FYR) of Macedonia, thus confusing irredentism (a real issue for many members of the political class in Skopje) with the name of the new republic. Opportunities for an honorable compromise on the name were lost in the early years, largely because of Greek obduracy. Greece's sensationalist press, aided by a group of professional patriots, succeeded in convincing public opinion that there was a real risk to Greece's territorial integrity. Pursuing a maximalist policy and employing a rhetoric that sounded very Greek to most foreigners, Greece became completely isolated on the issue.

On the other hand, Greece was not always helped by the attitude adopted by its allies and partners. The intervention of Western powers in the region, and more concretely in the former Yugoslavia, has been strongly influenced by short-term considerations, while also reflecting a remarkable lack of understanding of the history and the political realities in this troubled part of the world.[9] Adding insult to

[8]See Thanos Veremis, *Greece's Balkan Entanglement* (Athens: Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, 1995).

[9]See Susan Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995).

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injury, Western allies seemed often to be chastising the Greeks for not behaving like Scandinavians—and in the Balkans at that!

Growing awareness of the deadlock created has led to a considerable shift in Greek official attitudes. Greece has thus begun to act as a stabilizing factor in the region, through its participation in the peacekeeping force in Albania, its constructive role in the collective efforts to prevent the escalation of conflict in the former Yugoslavia, its decision to improve relations and engage in regular dialogue with the still "unnamed republic", and, perhaps most importantly, through trade and investment.

Although relatively poor by EU standards, Greece is an economic giant in the region. In money terms, its GDP is now bigger than that of Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, the FYR of Macedonia and the new Yugoslavia put together, even though its population is only one-fifth as large. At current exchange rates, Greek per capita GDP is also approximately four times that of Turkey. Trade with its northern neighbors has grown, despite the economic difficulties experienced by the countries in the region; and Greek investment has also increased rapidly—arguably the most important contribution that Greece can make to stabilization in the region. Greece's economic and political weight is further strengthened by its membership of both the EU and NATO, as long as the policies pursued by Athens do not diverge widely from those of its partners and allies. This has become increasingly true in recent times. However, difficulties and tensions still occasionally arise, especially regarding relations with Turkey.

GREECE IS fundamentally a status quo country in a part of the world where the status quo is being challenged from many directions. Worried about the instability on its northern frontier, it also perceives a direct threat to its territorial integrity emanating from Turkey. While this threat may be sometimes exaggerated by the Greeks, it is nonetheless real. The long list of unresolved bilateral issues between Greece and what is formally its NATO ally on the other side of the Aegean Sea, the continuing problem of Cyprus affecting directly both Greece and Turkey, the military build-up on both sides, and the repeated threats of war from Turkish generals and politicians are not figments of the otherwise fertile imagination of the Greeks. Indeed, living with Turkey as a neighbor is by no means a guarantee of an easy and comfortable life for most of the countries sharing a frontier with it. The relatively recent memory of an empire, the large size and strategic position of the country, the serious instability of its political system, coupled with huge internal disparities and the threat of Islamic fundamentalism, the dominant position of the army in domestic politics, and the institutionalization of state violence—all these combine to make Turkey a very difficult country to deal with.

Nobody could, of course, seriously argue that Greece has no share of responsibility for the poor state of relations with its eastern neighbor, and this is regrettable. For Greece has a vested interest in the economic development and political stability of Turkey. The last thing that Greeks should want is a poor and internally divided Turkey, one more vulnerable to the temptation offered by political Islam and military adventures abroad. In this respect, Greece has a common interest with its European and American allies.

Support for Turkey's association with the EU, leading eventually to full membership of the Union, should be entirely consistent with the above objectives. This should receive the full support of Greece, and that has been forthcoming on occasions, although not consistently. Still, Turkey's rapprochement with European institutions is and should be dependent on the fulfillment of certain criteria, including most notably the proper functioning of democratic institutions, the rule of law, the protection of human rights and the respect of minorities. The EU is not a simple common market, nor is it a military alliance in which the emphasis is placed entirely on the defense

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of frontiers and not at all on the defense of democratic institutions and the rights of citizens. Turkey's democratic record leaves an enormous amount to be desired, which presents European countries with genuine problems. Searching for an optimum combination in the use of the carrot and the stick, they have also realized that the influence they can exert on internal developments in Turkey is rather limited. On this question, European and American attitudes have often diverged. For Washington, Turkey is basically a strategic ally, while for the Europeans it is also an associate and potential partner in what is considered by many as an emerging federation. This fundamentally different perspective is bound to lead sometimes to diverging policies.

For its part, Greece has tended to overplay and misplay the EU card in relations with Turkey. As long as it does not fulfill the economic and political criteria set by the Union, Turkey will not be considered for membership of the EU, irrespective of whether Greece wants it to be or not. Thus Greece's loud objections, mainly intended for domestic consumption, have sometimes served the purpose of providing a fig leaf for some of its European partners who did not want to incur any political or economic cost in their relations with Ankara.

But Greece has gone further, by establishing a link between Greek-Turkish bilateral issues and the resolution of the Cyprus problem on the one hand, and the strengthening of EU relations on the other. The latter includes the granting of EU financial aid to Turkey. Not always succeeding in persuading its partners about the desirability of a second link, Greek governments have had to resort to the use of veto in order to block particular measures or policy statements concerning relations with Turkey. More often than not, these vetoes have had a symbolic rather than a practical significance.

Greek politicians have thus tended to forget an important principle: namely, that vetoes inside the EU can only be used in exceptional circumstances and for short periods—a general rule that should apply even more to small and medium-sized countries. For Greek politicians, playing to the gallery at home has sometimes proved a strong enough incentive to override the cost of isolation in European councils. This may be a high cost for a country that, largely because of geography, needs to rely more on diplomacy than military strength for the defense of its territory. Even worse, this course of action has hardly produced any tangible benefits in relations with Turkey.

In February of this year the Greek government was caught, very much against its own will, in the last episode of Mr. Ocalan's wandering from country to country in search of political refuge, which ended with the arrest of the outlawed Kurdish leader by the Turkish authorities. The leader of the PKK having entered illegally into the country, the government was faced with an almost impossible situation. It tried to steer a middle course between satisfying popular support for the Kurdish cause, a sentiment widely shared in most European countries, and adding yet another problem to bilateral relations with Turkey. It tried to export the problem, as Italy had done before. But the whole operation was badly handled, and the government of Mr. Simitis came out as a loser on both the domestic and the international front.

With a strong perception of an external threat, Greece has looked to EU membership as a means of strengthening its own security, and in this respect, it has been deeply frustrated. The Union's common foreign and security policy is not common, and it still has little to do with security. Rightly or wrongly, most European countries have until now preferred to leave the responsibility for collective actions in this area to the Atlantic Alliance. Furthermore, the majority of EU members have tried to avoid becoming involved in bilateral disputes between Greece and Turkey. Greek appeals to Community solidarity and the arguments based on law and right have not always proved to be sufficiently persuasive. This has undoubtedly added to Greek frustration.

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Much as they may wish to do so, EU countries simply cannot afford to stay away from the problems generated by the complex reality of southeastern Europe, be they in Kosovo, Bosnia or Cyprus. The Union has started negotiating with the government in Cyprus on its accession. Cyprus is one of the six countries in the so-called fast track leading to membership of the EU, and arguably it will be able to fulfill the basic criteria for membership more easily than any of the other candidates.

Yet it remains a divided country, and the crucial question is whether early accession to the EU could act as a catalyst for an internal political settlement between the two communities on the island or whether the internal settlement should be considered as a pre-condition for accession. Not surprisingly, the governments in Athens and Nicosia have opted for the former, fearing that if accession were to be made conditional on an internal settlement (i.e., on the willingness of Turkish Cypriots and Turkey to play the game), the accession of Cyprus would risk being written off *ad calendas Graecas*. This is another important reason why the Union will have to become more directly involved in the search for a viable solution to the problem of this divided island, something that would contribute much to the improvement of Greek-Turkish relations.

Domestic Reforms and External Alliances

GREECE HAS traveled a long distance since the fall of the colonels' dictatorship in 1974. Democracy has been consolidated, and this has been achieved in an extremely peaceful manner. Greek democracy has had its share of demagogues, and public opinion falls prey sometimes to populist rhetoric. This is, of course, not totally unknown in other democracies. It could be argued that, for several years, economic stabilization and much needed structural reforms were sacrificed for the sake of democratic consolidation.

Membership of the European Union has acted as a powerful catalyst for domestic reform/modernization. Adjustment to the requirements of membership of this very unusual club, in which the most advanced democracies and mixed economies of Europe experiment in new forms of pooling of sovereignty, has been difficult and rather painful for Greece. Resistance to change from organized groups proved powerful enough to delay the process of adjustment for many years. The forces of reform/modernization have now taken the upper hand, although there is still much that needs to be done.

Greece does not have the luxury enjoyed by many West European countries for whom external threat has become a rather abstract notion since the disintegration of the Soviet empire. Developments in the Balkans in recent years, coupled with the continuing tension in relations with Turkey, reaching sometimes dangerous peaks, have tended to create a siege mentality in Greek society. In the early 1990s, and to a much lesser extent now, this was cultivated by a group of politicians across the political spectrum who apparently decided to invest in nationalist shares. They were strongly encouraged by a large section of the media. Again, this is, undoubtedly, no Greek monopoly.

In general, Greek diplomacy has experienced difficulties in finding the right combination of the language of might, right and common interests. It has often placed almost exclusive emphasis on what it perceives as right on issues of foreign policy, while not paying enough attention to the need for building coalitions and identifying common interests with other countries. It has failed to appreciate that moralizing in international relations is mostly the privilege of the strong.

For Greece, membership of the EU certainly constitutes the most important element of its domestic *and* foreign policy. But the country happens to exist in an unstable neighborhood; and no kind of foreign policy can transport it away from that location. Moreover, it will, unfortunately, remain on

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the frontier of the Union for many years to come, because none of its neighbors is likely to be able to fulfill the criteria for membership for some time. Guarding frontier posts requires continuous vigilance and *sang-froid*. It also requires skillful diplomacy. Greece needs to act as a stabilizing force in the region.

Relations with the United States suffered for several years as many Greeks were critical of the attitude adopted by the Americans during the period of the dictatorship. The invasion of Cyprus by Turkish forces and the widely held suspicion in Greece that U.S. policymakers tended to favor might over right in the wide range of Greek-Turkish disputes added much to the problem. Greater care for Greek sensitivities shown by American officials in the more recent period, coupled with increasing self-confidence on the Greek side, have gradually contributed to the healing of old wounds. Membership of the EU is not incompatible with active participation in the Atlantic Alliance and a close relationship with the United States. That relationship has a long history and deep roots, including the presence of a sizeable and highly dynamic community of Americans of Greek origin. Greece should always avoid being placed in the position of having to make a choice between the European and the Atlantic dimension.

Greece will need to combine domestic reforms with careful diplomacy abroad. Structural reforms can only succeed if social cohesion is preserved. This will be a difficult task for reformers/modernizers. On the other hand, national interests can only be defended successfully through alliances, formal or ad hoc. It is to be hoped that Greeks have learned a valuable lesson from sometimes bitter experience. □

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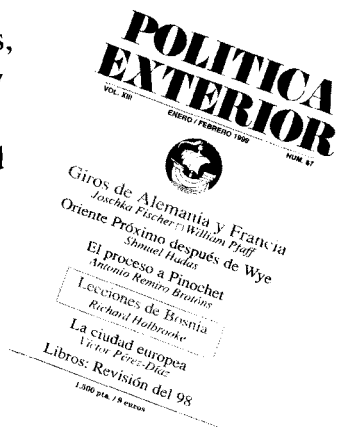

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The Poverty of Anti-Communism

John Lukacs

THE BASIC STATEMENT of American anti-Communism, as well as the basic conception of the Cold War, is the one expressed by William Buckley, Jr., who got it from James Burnham. I quote: "In 1917 history changed gears." Apart from the weirdness of such a mechanical metaphor—as if history were an automobile—the meaning of it is that the Russian Communist revolution was *the* principal and decisive event of this century, which thereafter was marked by the struggle between International Communism and the Free World (whatever *that* is). There are few statements about the history of the world of which one may say that they are complete nonsense. This is one of them.

The principal event of the twentieth century—which was a short century, lasting seventy-five years, from 1914 to 1989—was the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. I need not expatiate what this catastrophe meant for Western civilization. The First World War led to the Second World War, and the Second World War to the Cold War. The two world wars were the two enormous mountain ranges in the shadows of which we lived until 1989.

The Russian Communist revolution in 1917 occurred during the First World War. This alone ought to reduce its historical importance. Unlike the French Revolution, which had spread across Western Europe, and which then led to a quarter century of great wars, the Russian Revolution was one consequence of a war then current, not the cause of it. Again, unlike the French and American Revolutions, the Russian one did not spread anywhere. Indeed, until 1945 the Soviet Union was the *only* Communist state in the world. Also, Communism in Russia could survive only at the price of the very retreat and diminution of Russia itself. From 1917 to 1920 five new states—Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland—broke off from Russia. They were determinedly anti-Communist ones—again, the very opposite of what had happened after the French Revolution.

Lenin thought and said that the location of the first Communist revolution in Russia was an accident, that further revolutions would very soon occur across Europe, and especially in Germany (he is waiting still in his unquiet grave). Lenin was a revolutionary, and a statesman not at all (Stalin turned out to be the opposite). Had the first Communist regime been established in Germany, its influence would have been immeasurably greater: because of German discipline, German energy, German organization and German reputation. The fact that Communism was incarnated in backward and semi-barbaric Russia was fatal to its reputation—except for conventicles of intellectuals and wannabe "revolutionaries" elsewhere in the world.

John Lukacs is a historian whose latest books include *The Hitler of History* (Knopf, 1997) and *A Thread of Years* (Yale University Press, 1998).

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During the quarter century after 1920, there were three great forces in the world. They were not only apparent on the political map but repeated within almost every nation of the globe, even in Asia and in the Americas, where each of the three ideologies had its partisans and its opponents. There was Western parliamentary democracy, incarnated by the English-speaking peoples and in Scandinavia and Western Europe. There was Communism, incarnated, I repeat, solely in Soviet Russia. And there was a new force, anti-Communist and nationalist socialism, incarnated in many places in the world but most forcefully in the Third Reich of Germany. Of these three forces, Communism, in spite of its assertion of being international, was the weakest, while National Socialism was the strongest. Eventually this became evident in the Second World War. To defeat the German Third Reich, the in many ways unnatural coalition of Communists and Capitalists, of Russia and the English-speaking democracies, was needed. Neither of them could do it without the other. The Russians could not have conquered Germany without the Anglo-Americans, and the Anglo-Americans—in spite of their tremendous superiority in manpower and material resources—would not have been able to conquer Germany by themselves. That alone should give us pause to think; but, then, this is not the main argument of this essay.

I MOVE ON NOW to the history of the Cold War (the coming of which Hitler had predicted but which came, fortunately, too late for him). If there is a key document for the evolution of the Cold War it is not Stalin's speech in February 1946, nor Churchill's Fulton speech about the Iron Curtain a month later, nor Yalta or Potsdam or Tehran. It is Churchill's statement to de Gaulle in November 1944 (recounted, incidentally, not in the former's but in the latter's war memoirs). After the liberation of Paris, Churchill had come to visit de Gaulle. The Frenchman tried to wean him away from the special Anglo-American alliance, but in vain. Among other things, de Gaulle said: Look at the Americans. They are inexperienced. They are letting half of Europe go to the Russians, without thinking much about it. Churchill responded, "Yes, Russia is now a hungry wolf amidst a flock of sheep. But after the meal comes the digestion period." As early as 1940 Churchill saw that in that war there were only two alternatives: either Germany would dominate all of Europe or Russia would dominate—temporarily—the eastern part of it; and one half of Europe (especially the western half) was better than none. After the war would come the digestion period; and the Russians would not be able to digest their East European conquests.

And so it was to be. And how soon these digestion problems appeared! In 1948 Tito's Yugoslavia broke off from Stalin's empire. In 1949 Stalin thought it best to put an end to his—partial—blockade of West Berlin. In 1950 his prudence and caution dictated that he give no support to the North Koreans, requesting the Chinese do that instead. The result was this: before 1950 North Korea had been largely a Russian satellite; by 1952 it had become a Chinese one. In 1952 Stalin (and his successors through 1953) was seriously considering the ditching of the East German Communist state, in exchange for an establishment of a "neutral"—that is, not American-allied—united German state. In 1954 the Russians agreed to retreat from Austria, and they gave up their privileges and ports and bases in eastern China. In 1955 they abandoned their naval base in Finland. In 1956 came the Hungarian and Polish revolutions. In 1958 their quarrel with China became public. In 1959 Khrushchev came to the United States, hoping among other things to get American support in his developing conflict with Communist China—in vain. In 1961 the drain of people fleeing from Communist East Germany had become so dangerous that its regime was forced to close up East from West Berlin by a wall.

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In 1962 came the Cuban Missile Crisis, from the beginning to the end of which it was (or, rather, should have been) evident that the Russians would not risk anything like a war for the sake of Cuba (just as in 1956, all anti-Communist rhetoric notwithstanding, the United States did not for a moment consider a war for the sake of Hungary). Indeed, the foreign policy of the United States was not only content with the existing division of Europe and of Germany and of Berlin, but would do nothing to risk upsetting it. As for the Vietnam War, Russian policy was similar to their Korean one: do little or nothing, don't risk anything.

Now the interesting—and, at least in some ways, lamentable—thing to notice is that the highest tide of American anti-Communism (which many people at the time equated with American patriotism), the highest peaks of American military and nuclear preparations, the greatest burgeoning of an American military-industrial state, occurred precisely in those periods when the Soviet Union was in retreat: in the 1950s in the Eisenhower years, and again in the 1980s during the Reagan era, propelled by the ideology of anti-Communism. In the latter period the Russians gave up Communism and their East European empire and their presence in Germany and Berlin; and not because Reagan forced the Soviet Union into bankruptcy but because no one believed in Communism any longer—something that, with all of its fabulous intelligence apparatus, even the CIA was unable to foresee, as indeed was admitted when it came to the demolition of the Berlin Wall.

But then this article is not meant to be a one-sided or potted summary of the Cold War. Its purpose is to argue the yawning failures of the ideology of anti-Communism. So let me close this portion of it with what I think is a trenchant observation. In 1945 *many thousands* of Germans committed suicide. Many of those who killed themselves were not National Socialist party leaders, some of them not even party members, but all of them believers. But I know not of a single instance, in or around 1989, when a believing Communist committed suicide because of the collapse of Communism, in Russia or elsewhere.[1] Dogmatic believers in Communism had ceased to exist long before, even as dogmatic anti-Communists continued to flourish.

ONE ARGUMENT that may be raised against the historical overview I have sketched is that, in the United States at least, Communists were more influential in the interwar period than were American pro-Fascists or pro-Nazis. This, too, may be arguable: for it can be said that in the 1930s Franklin Roosevelt's most dangerous popular challengers came from the Right, not from the Left: from Huey Long and Father Coughlin, for example. Still, the influence and the intellectual appeal of Communism in America *was* considerable, an influence that spread well beyond the limited number of American Communists. Again there is one statement that sums up the matter succinctly and precisely—a sentence in the first volume of George Kennan's *Memoirs*:

> The penetration of the American governmental services by members or agents (conscious or otherwise) of the American Communist Party in the 1930s was not a figment of the imagination. It really existed: and it assumed proportions which, while never overwhelming, were also not trivial.

There is no need to rehearse the history of the CPUSA during the crucial second quarter of the twentieth century. There exists a sufficiency of serious studies about the topic, including the sociology—more precisely, the sociography—of immigrant and native American Communists. But, again, there is a written passage (ignored by the authors of the aforementioned studies) that I find especially

[1]One—possible—exception: the suicide of General Akhromaev, former Soviet chief of staff; but it is reasonable to conclude that he killed himself not because of the end of Communism but because of the collapse of the Russian military empire.

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telling. It is germane to the history of the 1930s, when some American Communists and Communist sympathizers succeeded in advancing themselves to certain governmental and bureaucratic positions in which they were no longer mere members of a revolutionary and largely uninfluential fringe group. The author of this passage is Edmund Wilson, who, like many other American intellectuals, had not been at all intelligent, or even perceptive, about what Communism meant. (In 1935, after a journey to Russia in the midst of Stalin's purges, he wrote that while there he had been "at the moral top of the world.") But in 1953, in his new foreword to the paperback edition of his 1929 novel, *I Thought of Daisy*, he wrote:

> Some time in the late thirties, at the time when . . . [the Soviets were] coming to seem respectable and Communism a passport to power in an impending international bureaucracy, I thought of doing a brief sequel to *Daisy*, in which some Washington official would be giving himself a sense of importance and enjoying a good deal of excitement through an underground connection with the Communists. . . . [Their] set would go on drinking, playing bridge and making passes at one another's girls with the conviction that these activities had been given a new dignity by being used to cover up operations which would eventually prove world-shaking and land them somehow at the top of the heap.

I consider this passage to be the best, and most perceptive, description of a certain kind of American Communist agent—to wit, the Alger Hiss type. In certain positions, and in certain circumstances, their influences, as Kennan put it, were "never overwhelming" but "also not trivial." They were able to do harm. Still, marked by their fateful immaturity, most of these people were playing at spying—not unlike most of the "revolutionaries" of the 1960s, who were only playing at being revolutionaries.

This should also reduce—or at least qualify—the importance of the recent "revelatory" documents from Moscow. In the first place, an agent must make work for himself, to prove that he is doing his job well. This was particularly true of members of the Soviet secret services when they reported that they had succeeded in recruiting X or Y, and when they listed others as "agents"—which, in many cases, was a vast exaggeration. (In the same way, many of the victims of the internal Soviet purges in the 1930s were the victims of overzealous secret policemen.) In the second place, at least in the 1930s, the materials their American collaborators provided to their Soviet contacts were not always valuable, for example the few pieces that Alger Hiss seems to have typed and given to his Soviet "drop" in 1938. I never doubted that Hiss was one of these sorry birds; but looking at some of these "documents" with the eye of a diplomatic historian, I found them of little or no value whatsoever. But then consider what every experienced historian knows (or at least ought to know), which is that documents do not make history, but rather it is history that makes documents: who wrote them and when and why and how? intended for what and for whom?

However, as I have said, a fair amount of harm *was* done: perhaps less by the passing of American state or nuclear secrets to the Soviets than by the protracted influence of Communist sympathizers in American publishing, as well as other academic and opinion-forming activities in the 1940s. While on the one hand we have the new revelations of Moscow documents (sometimes of questionable value), we also have the special pleading of nostalgic reminiscences about American Communists under siege in the climate around 1950—as for example in Philip Roth's recent novel, *I Married a Communist*, or the protracted attempts at a rehabilitation of the Rosenbergs. I have no sympathy for such views and arguments, for the simple reason that, at the latest by 1945, those American Communists and their sympathizers ought to have known better. By that time there was enough evidence about the brutalities of

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Stalin and of Communists, not only in Russia but in many other places of the world. Factual accounts of such conditions, acts and events were available in a great variety of books and articles, there for anyone who could read. Yet many thousands of Communists and their sympathizers refused to give them a thought. And here we meet with what seems to be the most essential weakness of the human mind, leading straight to a corruption of character, something that has nothing to do with Intelligence Quotients or with functions of the brain: for it involves, not an inability to think about certain matters, but an unwillingness to do so.

IN JUNE 1848, less than a year after Marx had written his *Communist Manifesto*, Alexis de Tocqueville walked across a Paris in the throes of the first "Red" revolution in history. Here and there he talked with the troops of General Cavaignac, gathering before the barricades. The Russian émigré Alexander Herzen (hero of many liberals ever since, including Isaiah Berlin) wrote that he despised Tocqueville for that. Yet it was the same Tocqueville who soon saw that the new danger for France and freedom was the popularity of anti-Communism, leading to the dictatorship of Louis Napoleon. "The insane fear of socialism", Tocqueville wrote in 1852, "throws the bourgeois headlong into the arms of despotism. . . . But now that the weakness of the Red party has been proved, people will regret the price at which their enemy has been put down."

"In this sense", I wrote in 1959, "I do not hesitate to say that Tocqueville was an anti-anti-Communist."[2] And so am I. Allow me to sum this up as briefly as I can. There are variations of anti-anti-Communism. There are those anti-anti-Communists who convince themselves that all enemies of freedom are to be found on their Right and not on the Left: their colors are, plainly, pink. And there is another kind of anti-anti-Communist who has no sympathy for Communism but who is appalled by the errors and dishonesties of anti-Communist ideology and of its propagation. (Such a posture does not necessarily imply moderation; "moderation in everything, including moderation.") Mathematically thinking, of course, an anti-anti-Communist is a pro-Communist. But we neither speak nor think mathematically. "Numbers", said Kierkegaard, "are a negation of truth."

There are variations of anti-Communism too. Again, as with many documents, they depend on the *when* and the *where* and the *how*. I have nothing but admiration for the slightest evidences of courageous anti-Communist acts or words in Stalinist Russia; or under whatever Communist regime; or even within Communist parties or pro-Communist conventicles anywhere in the world. But I have hardly more than contempt for those who think it best to adopt anti-Communism as an ideology when that is not only safe, but popular and even profitable for themselves.

Of course, this tendency is apparent not merely among intellectuals but among statesmen. Churchill and Hitler were both anti-Communists, even as both of them recognized that the dominant impulse of the century was nationalism, not Communism. Both knew that Stalin was much more of a Russian nationalist than an international Communist. But Churchill would, on occasion, publicly say so, while Hitler never would. What Hitler recognized was the popular respectability of anti-Communism—among "conservatives" but also among the working classes. (The wish for respectability among the masses was one of the many things that Marx had completely failed to recognize.) It was the respectability of Hitler's anti-Communism—not the respectability of his anti-Semitism—that brought him to power in Germany. In November 1932 he said to President Hindenburg, "The Bolshevization of the masses proceeds rapidly." He knew that this

[2]See my introduction to *Tocqueville: The European Revolution and Correspondence with Gobineau* (New York: Peter Smith, 1959).

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was not true; but he also knew that this kind of argument would impress Hindenburg and the German conservatives. Less than three months later they installed him in power.

Another eight months on he said, "The Red revolt could have spread across Germany like wildfire. . . . We have been waging a heroic struggle against the Communist threat." This at a time when the Communists in Germany had been annihilated, with their leaders in prison or in exile. To Germany's Catholic bishops he said, "The defense of Europe against Bolshevism is our task for the next two or three hundred years." That was the argument that inclined many (though not all) European, British and American conservatives not to oppose Hilter. In 1941 Archbishop (later Cardinal) von Galen spoke out openly from the pulpit of his church against the Nazi policy of euthanasia, a rare and perhaps unique public statement of opposition during the entire history of Hitler's Reich. Hitler thought it best not to move against or to restrain Galen, for in the same speech Galen had welcomed the German invasion of Russia, that crusade against atheistic Bolshevism. (And he did not say a word about the German persecution and murdering of Jews.) There, in a nutshell, we may find the essence of the Germans' tragedy.

IN THE HISTORY OF the United States, too, the ideology of anti-Communism long predates the Second World War, not to speak of the Cold War. As early as 1854, George Fitzhugh, an intellectual defender of the South, wrote that the enemies of the Southern order were "Communists." The history of the first Red Scare in 1919-21 is well known. Less well known are the statements of members of Coolidge's cabinet, including the otherwise moderate Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg, to the effect that the troubles in Mexico in the 1920s, and in Nicaragua, were due to "Bolsheviks." In December 1941, three days before Pearl Harbor, Senator Robert A. Taft (a hero of many of today's conservatives) proclaimed that while "Fascism" only appealed to a few, Communism was a much greater danger because it appealed to many. (This when Hitler's armies stood fifteen miles from Moscow.)

Between 1947 and 1955 the Second Red Scare—admittedly, with more justification than the first—swelled into an oceanic tide, leading to the entire identification of anti-Communism with American patriotism. We need not list its many excesses here, except to note two matters. One is that the ideological vision of International Communism obscured and compromised the very perceptions, and the conduct, of American foreign policy. The other is the then-contemporaneous emergence of an American conservative movement, the composition and ideology of which was as anti-Communist as it was anti-liberal. Men and women who had been isolationists but a few years before now became extreme internationalists, arguing not only for the containment but for the conquest of the Soviet Union.

The consequences of this mutation of the political and ideological climate were considerable. They included the opportunism of President Eisenhower, who in 1945 had chosen to reject Churchill when it came to Anglo-American political and military strategy in Central Europe, preferring to approach Stalin directly instead. Less than eight years later, the same Eisenhower refused Churchill again (privately referring to him as senile and naive) when the English leader proposed an attempt to negotiate a revision of the division of Europe with the Soviet leadership, after Stalin's death. Or there was Henry Luce's *Life* magazine, which in 1942 printed a full-page photograph of Lenin with the caption: "This was perhaps the greatest man of the century." Nine years later it editorialized that while Communism was a Mortal Sin, McCarthyism was but a Venial one. The ultimate beneficiary of this ideological revolution was of course Ronald Reagan in the 1980s—when, for the first time in American history, more Americans identified themselves as "conservatives" than as "liberals."

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And, as so often, intellectuals were quick in climbing onto the bandwagon. There was Hannah Arendt, in her *Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), a flawed and fraudulent book from beginning to end. Flawed, because her analysis of "totalitarianism" was nonsense; fraudulent, because, after her manuscript had been rejected by publisher after publisher, she quickly added two chapters about Stalin at the end.

Whittaker Chambers, who deserves our sympathy, was not fraudulent; but he certainly was wrong in attributing to International Communism the ability to engineer "mankind's decisive transformation . . . about to close its 2000-year experience of Christian civilization." Of course, these were the inclinations of an honest man to attribute all of the evils of the world to the wrong from which he had, after great inner troubles, escaped. Still, both Chambers' sense of proportion *and* his perspective of history were flawed.

Some of the shrillest prophets of anti-Communism in the "conservative" camp (Chambers did not identify himself as "conservative") were former Communists or Trotskyites. Then in the late 1960s, the wave of neoconservatism arose—composed mostly of men and women for whom it had taken fifty years to discover that the Russians were anti-Semitic. Since then, all of the dishonest and imbecile Revisionists and Revolutionaries of the 1960s notwithstanding, and all of the lamentable presence of Political Correctness in American universities notwithstanding, the influence of these so-called neoconservatives has become more and more evident, and in certain areas of public discourse even prominent. Are they more honest, or better, than the pinkish Lib-Lab intellectuals of the Twenties and the Thirties? In some instances, perhaps yes; generally, alas, no.

"Totalitarianism", as understood by Hannah Arendt, had certain recognizable general characteristics. First, all totalitarians tended to be anti-Semitic. Second, totalitarians aimed at the conquest of the entire globe. Third, totalitarian rule was bound to become not only broader but stricter and stricter as time went on. A mere few years after her magnum opus appeared, events proved that all of this was nonsense. Was Castro, or Pol Pot, or Ho Chi Minh anti-Semitic? Was Khrushchev an even greater tyrant than Stalin? All of this in no way harmed her reputation, but that is not the point. "Totalitarianism", not only to Hannah Arendt, but to libertarians and to all kinds of conservatives, means the overall power of the state. But look at Russia now, when the danger is the exact opposite: the weakness, not the power, of the state.

We have experienced a phenomenon unparalleled in history, and there are not many things unparalleled in history: a great empire giving up its possessions—without external pressure, and without a bloody revolution in its midst. By the 1980s the only people who believed in the existence of International Communism—though there were, alas, still many of them—were the conservatives and neoconservatives and their plethora of time-servers in Reagan's administrations. Compared to them the number of believers in Communism in Russia, or in the Communist states of Eastern Europe, were a minuscule remnant. And now we have the promoters of wild Capitalism in Russia, Harvard savants such as Jeffrey Sachs—a successor of another Harvard illusionist eighty years ago, the then-celebrated John Reed. It is at least possible that the consequences of the Ten Days That Shook The World may have been nothing compared to the consequences of the Ten Years That Are Now Shaking Russia.

I FLED my native country in 1946, fifty-three years ago, when I knew that sooner rather than later it would fall under Communist rule. But I did so not because Communism was strong, nor because Communism was the ideology taken up by masses of my people. On the contrary: Communism was unappealing; it was antiquated; it was unpopular, except with a few. The reality was the presence of Russian armed forces, not Communism; and that, I

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believed, would stay in my part of Europe for a long time, perhaps fifty years. (I was ten years off, thank God.) This distinction between Russian armed power and the ideology of Communism was something that many Americans did not comprehend—or perhaps did not wish to comprehend—or, perhaps more precisely, were made not to comprehend by politicians, ideologues and propagandists of all kinds.[3] To illustrate this would take an entire volume, and not a small one. Alas, the history—including the psychology—of anti-Communism is yet to be written. □

[3]I have written about this before. See, for example, the chapter entitled "Anti-Anti" in *Confessions of An Original Sinner* (New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1990).

Responses to Lukacs

William F. Buckley, Jr.:

JOHN LUKACS DELIGHTS to provoke, and succeeds wonderfully in doing so. This time around his launch is my having named 1917 and the Communization of Russia the principal political event of the century. "In 1917 history changed gears", to quote myself. In passing, Mr. Lukacs bemoans the "weirdness" of the "mechanical metaphor"—"as if history were an automobile." It's a lucky thing Lukacs was not around when the Romans came up with *deus ex machina*.

What is he saying? That the Communist threat was ephemeral; that, as a matter of fact, the Communist state dissolved ten years earlier than he had predicted. He goes on to recite Soviet setbacks in Korea, Berlin, Yugoslavia and China, which is on the order of telling us of all the battles Napoleon lost. He is disdainful of the neocons' efforts to mobilize a movement around the premises of the Committee on the Present Danger. He mocks what others have thought an operative distinction: "the struggle between International Communism and the Free World (whatever *that* is)." "That" is the term used to describe those nations in the world whose governments were not controlled by Moscow or Peking.

The working distinction was entirely serviceable, guiding geostrategic thought and action. In 1965 President Johnson sent the Marines to the Dominican Republic to preempt what he feared would be a coup by pro-Communists. If such a coup had succeeded, it would have meant one more Castro in the Caribbean. At the time the Marines arrived at the eastern end of the island, Baby Doc Duvalier was lording it over the western half of Hispañola, presiding over as much misery as Castro brought to Cuba; but in the global perspective, Duvalier was nothing. Johnson was not engaged in a Wilsonian venture; he was watching over the ramparts.

Much of what Lukacs says is obvious, and not threatened by the generality about 1917 that so aroused him. Yes, if Germany, not Russia, had been Communized, that would have been more serious. Yes, the true believers in Communism diminished significantly in number as the oppressive emptiness of the Marxist regimes transpired. But it wasn't pro-Communists we had so much to worry about, rather an amalgam of defeatists, pacifists and accommodationists, on whom successive regimes in Moscow banked to undermine the Western will.

The act of 1917 was less than critical historically? It fueled Stalin's ideological imperialism in 1945. Here is a personal perspective: I was nineteen years old when the bomb fell on Hiroshima; I was a senior citizen when the

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Wall came down in Berlin. My entire adult lifetime was spent during the period that Eastern Europe was in chains. How critical Communist faith—sincere or feigned—was to the leaders of the Soviet superpower we are free to deliberate. But *they* thought it critical, even as one must suppose a pope considers it critical to affirm Christianity. Gorbachev reaffirmed his faith in Communism in January of 1987, the second year in which he held power. The workers' banner had to be held high, he thought, on pressing the war in Afghanistan, even if it rested on philosophical, historical and sociological junk. He sought to justify a mission that would otherwise have been denounced in the same accents used to discredit British colonialism. Fidel Castro saw the need to make this reaffirmation on the last day of 1998.

It's all very strange, given that dilettantes with minimum historical ingenuity can argue discrete events as historically critical, e.g., the birth of Einstein; Hitler; Lenin. John Lukacs for years has labored to dissociate himself from the credenda of us cold warriors, who labored so hard to protect his liberties: One more fruit of victory. □

William F. Buckley, Jr., is editor-at-large of *National Review*.

Robert Conquest:

JOHN LUKACS seems to have abandoned his usual critical stance on a wide front; this note covers only some of his many points.

He quotes William Buckley, Jr., as saying that history changed gears in 1917, and insists that it really changed gears in 1914. But all this is metaphorical; and anyhow, if we stick to the metaphor history might be allowed more than one change of gear. And even if we accept that the outbreak of World War I was the beginning of the century's Gadarene rush, it can be argued that but for the Bolshevik Revolution that rush might yet have been stopped.

Odder yet are Lukacs' notions, first that Buckley was speaking *ex cathedra*, and second that he has formal authority over the views of anyone else.

This is all of a piece with his extraordinary listing of Nazism, Communism and anti-Communism as three "ideologies." Ideology is, to be sure, a word used variously by different people. But Lukacs' implication here is clearly that these three isms are comparable mindsets. They are not. First, as against Nazism and Communism, "anti-Communist" does not describe anyone's thought *except* on the issue of the nature of Communism. Whereas in the case of Communism, even if various of its sects interpreted it differently, they were all committed to a single and comprehensive world view. Anti-Communists were not; they included Catholics and atheists, conservatives and social democrats, Republicans and Democrats, Ernst Reuter and Arthur Koestler, George Orwell and Ernest Bevin, Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Andrei Sakharov, Scoop Jackson and Ronald Reagan, and so on and on.

I think I too can claim to figure as an "anti-Communist" (anti-Stalinist, anti-Maoist, anti-Castroist) of long standing. The reasons for, and the nature of, my anti-Communism have not changed in the least over the decades. My political and philosophical opinions have changed in a number of ways—even to-ing and fro-ing more than once between the major American and British political parties. Most, but not all, serious anti-Communists are equally anti-Fascist. That is, they are anti-totalitarian: or, to put it another way, we reject all closed systems of political and social thought, all supposedly infallible historical predictions,

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in favor of pluralism, pragmatism, short views, trial and error.

In Lukacs' account of the Cold War's development, the USSR is shown as repeatedly withdrawing, or considering withdrawing, from Eastern Europe. One would hardly guess from this that, except for a few marginal territories, Soviet power in Europe stood on much the same lines in 1990 as in 1945. The only significant exception was Yugoslavia—which in any case remained Communist, and the independence of which from Moscow was more than offset by the almost simultaneous Sovietization of Czechoslovakia (never mentioned by Lukacs).

Again, Lukacs says that there was only one Communist state in 1945, as if to diminish the significance of its threat. Some of the temporarily independent states of the former Russian empire were reconquered and reintegrated into the new empire in 1918-20, so that there was only one Communist state because it had swallowed others (though even this omits Mongolia, for instance). To assert such a thing as of 1945, moreover, is simply to ignore the absorption of the Baltic States in 1940!

Lukacs rightly notes that some anti-Communists could legitimately be accused of hysteria. So could plenty of anti-anti-Communists, in America as elsewhere. Indeed, as one who remained in Europe after Lukacs left (and, in fact, lived in a Communist country until 1948), I note that in Britain and France virtually all the hysteria was from the anti-anti-Communist side—as Orwell pointed out long ago.

Meanwhile, surely we can be spared the logic of "Father Coughlin was a half-crazed fanatic. Father Coughlin was anti-Communist. Therefore all anti-Communists are half-crazed fanatics." □

Robert Conquest is a fellow of the Hoover Institution. His *Reflections on a Ravaged Century* will be published by W.W. Norton later this year.

Nathan Glazer:

JOHN LUKACS' "The Poverty of Anti-Communism", like so much of his writing, is filled with *obiter dicta*, some of which strike one as well taken, some of which seem nonsensical (Hannah Arendt's *Origins of Totalitarianism* "fraudulent"?; her analysis of totalitarianism "nonsense"?), and others of which are just mystifying.

To reduce the significance of anti-Communism, it is necessary to reduce the significance of Communism, and Lukacs does this in three ways: he concentrates on Russia and the Soviet Union as the chief, indeed the only significant, carrier of Communism; he ignores the role of Communism in Western Europe; and he just about ignores the role of Communism in China—after all, the largest country in the world—and in much of the Third World.

One problem in getting to grips with his essay is that while we have a clear idea of two of the three great forces that according to Lukacs competed for world dominance in the second quarter of the twentieth century, we have no clear idea of what this third force, Communism, was, and of what Lukacs conceives it to be. Parliamentary democracy and National Socialism can be specifically described, in terms of their ideology and their political and economic institutions. But what is the Communism that competed with them and that according to Lukacs was the weakest of the three? He treats it basically as Russian nationalism and imperialism. Indeed, Russia was economically and in the end militarily weaker than either Germany under Hitler, or the United States. Fears of this

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Communism could in many quarters be described as excessive and exaggerated. But Communism had a specifically ideological content, as did parliamentary democracy and National Socialism, and this ideological content—its philosophy of history, its criticism of capitalism, its utopian hope in an ideal and final condition of society to be constituted by the proletariat—is not so easily dismissed. It had a robust history, and one which is not yet at an end, despite the collapse of the Russian empire.

It may well be the case that hardly anyone believed in Communism in Russia as its economy disintegrated, and as its people experienced Communism in practice, as realized by the dictatorial leaders of an authoritarian party. But the West was confronting a closed society where one could not conduct opinion polls, in possession of very powerful armed forces and atomic weapons, and an ideology that demanded fulfillment through expansion. It is too easy after the fact to dismiss the serious concern that this situation required. Possibly no one believes in Communism in China now too, and we deal there with more conventional issues in foreign policy and strategy, and the fact that the posters of Marx and Engels are still to be found there may not matter much. But North Korea, which gives us much concern, is an avowedly and formally Communist state. Would it be just as troublesome if it were simply a nationalist North Korea without Communist ideology? I do not think so.

In Italy and France there were huge Communist parties, Communism had great influence among the intellectual classes, and we feared a possible Communist victory in those countries in the wake of World War II. The heirs of these parties still play a large role in the politics of these countries. What do we make of this? Was Communism simply an epiphenomenon? Was it simply to be shrugged off? Or did it not require continual battle, in various spheres, from the academic and intellectual to the electoral, to keep the spread of Communism in check?

There is no reference to Latin America or Africa or South Asia in Lukacs' essay. Was the appeal of Communism in those areas simply a calculated ploy by cynical leaders to see how much poor countries could get from the Cold War antagonists, by threatening to go over to the other side? That was part of the story of the surprising strength of Communism in many poor countries. But a larger part was the attraction of a fully formulated ideology that explained why poor people became and remained poor, and why poor nations became and remained poor. In the universities of Latin America, of Africa, of South Asia, that ideology is still dominant in the social sciences and the humanities. It plays no small role still in the universities of the Western World.

Just as Communism came in many versions, so did anti-Communism. Anti-Communism, in practice, was simply hardheadedness and common sense as to just what was happening in Communist-ruled countries to political rights and the exercise of freedom of thought, resistance to the romanticization and glorification of Communism, awareness of the threat posed by the expansion of Communism. In the United States and Western Europe, anti-Communism was specifically a fight against the illusions that captured Edmund Wilson in 1935, and that he had outgrown by 1953. A good number of people, and particularly those who became the neoconservatives (who, Lukacs incorrectly writes, "had taken fifty years to discover that the Russians were anti-Semitic"), had known about Communism all along, and had no romantic illusions about it at all. They did not need Solzhenitsyn, as apparently French intellectuals did, to tell them about Soviet labor camps and the fate of political dissidents.

There may have been problems with anti-Communism, in some of its versions, but on the whole it performed a key intellectual task of the post-World War II world, and compared to the significance of that task its errors and excesses were venial. □

Nathan Glazer is professor emeritus of education and sociology at Harvard University and co-editor of *The Public Interest*.

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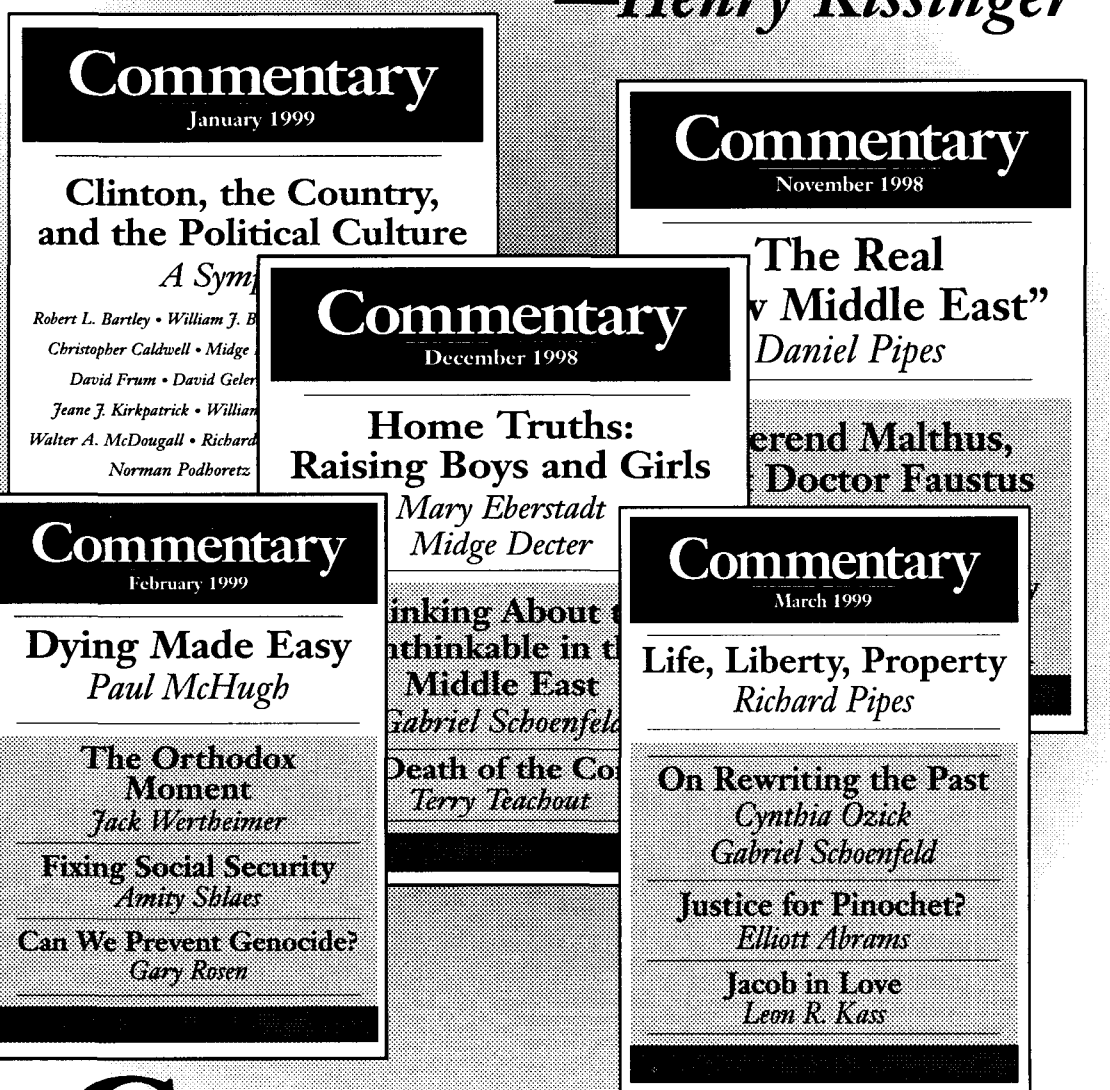
"Our conscience and our inspiration in working together toward a world in which the just can be free and the weak secure."

—*Henry Kissinger*



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Books

How the West Was Spun

John O'Sullivan

David Gress, *From Plato to Nato* (New York: Free Press, 1998), 592 pp., $28.

Christopher Coker, *Twilight of the West* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 203 pp., $28.

IS THE West an idea? A civilization? Or a set of political arrangements? Plainly it is all three and, as a result, difficult to pin down between hard covers. For if we talk about the decline of the West, we may be discussing the difficulties that NATO encounters in formulating policy toward the Balkans, or the rise of ideologies such as environmentalism that blame the problems of the world on Western science and capitalism, or the debasement of Western (and other) cultures by Hollywood's entertainment industry. Or ten other topics.

So both David Gress and Christopher Coker have set themselves a formidable task when they attempt to chart the West's progress. And though they are fairly near to each other on the political spectrum—Mr. Gress being a judicious Danish neoconservative and Mr. Coker a pessimistic English conservative—they have written very different books. To oversimplify, Mr. Gress is inclined to stress the concept of the West as an organic civilization—though one repeatedly riven by civil and cultural wars—and therefore to believe that its political structures are natural and likely to survive. Mr. Coker tends to see the West as an idea in the minds of poets and philosophers, and he therefore envisages its political links being gradually eaten away by the intellectual acids of Europeanism, multiculturalism and postmodern skepticism.

Yet it is Mr. Gress who opens his book on a note of strong skepticism about the idea of the West—or, rather, that particular idea of the West he calls "the Grand Narrative." This was the account, promulgated in such forums as the contemporary civilization course at Columbia and the "Great Books" program at the University of Chicago, that depicted Western history as the progress of liberty from the ancient Greeks to modern America. Mr. Gress concedes that these were great educational enterprises in their day, but he skillfully deconstructs their claim to be an adequate account of the actual social and intellectual history of the West.

Their essential error was to treat liberty as a moral abstraction, invented by the Greeks and passed on to the modern age, almost out-

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side of history, by a series of great thinkers and great books. This involved a number of distortions. It blurred the serious differences between the Greek concept of liberty as the right to participate in government, and the Western idea of liberty as, in Benjamin Constant's phrase, "the individual's right to his own pursuits." It leapt nimbly over those lengthy historical interludes that did not lend themselves to a buoyant account of liberty's progress—i.e., the Roman Empire, the Dark Ages and indeed most of the period from the Greeks to 1776. It downplayed crucial elements in Western history, such as the specifically religious aspects of Christianity, which had helped to form Western ideas of liberty but which did not conform to the political sympathies of its liberal authors, and such as the importance of the Germanic tribes in the Dark Ages (because of possible confusion with a modern nation-state of the same name). And it exaggerated the role that (admittedly important) philosophers, such as Locke and Rousseau, had played in making Western freedom a practical possibility. In other words the "Grand Narrative" saw the whole of Western history "from Plato to Nato" as a teleological process leading up to moral perfection in the form of the modern American liberal circa 1955.

In the words of *Private Eye*: Shome misthtake, surely. Neither the West nor any real-world civilization could possibly live up to this idealized picture of inevitable progress punctuated by what Gress calls "Magic Moments"—Magna Carta! The Copernican Revolution! 1776! The Atlantic Charter! The actual history of the West has included such unpleasant features as war, slavery, social oppression, religious bigotry and torture, economic inequality and racial arrogance. These evils were not confined to the West, of course, and a case could easily be made that Western civilization has acted to correct them sooner and more thoroughly than any other civilization. But their mere existence undermined the "Grand Narrative." Western civilization was more—and worse—than a history of liberty. It was not even the story of liberty triumphing over these evils, since, in greater or lesser form, they still exist. Might it not be, then, that the West was the story of these evils triumphing over liberty—and then hypocritically donning the red cap? Indeed, that was the judgment of anti-Western radicals (themselves usually Western) in the Sixties and, after the briefest possible resistance, the verdict accepted by the very liberals whose story the "Grand Narrative" had been.

Having demolished the authorized version, Gress sets down his own account of how liberty actually developed—not as an isolated abstraction but intertwined with slavery, war and oppression and flourishing especially in the interstices of Western history. He quotes Montesquieu to the effect that freedom and prosperity occur "in societies where several govern", as when the clashes between the Holy Roman Empire and the Papacy enabled not only kings but also self-governing cities to demarcate some autonomy. And because liberty produced prosperity when it was allowed to do so, intelligent rulers often left its accidental occurrences alone or, more rarely, deliberately instituted limited editions of it. "Liberty grew because it served the interests of power", says Gress in the first sentence of his book. As the West took on distinctive shape, however, Power increasingly found that Liberty had either slipped from its control or that its benefits were too valuable to risk losing.

But this is to summarize brutally what is a *tour de force* of historical argument and criticism. In search of changing concepts of the West, Gress guides us through the Roman Empire, late Antiquity, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the age of Liberalism and our own century. He deals exhaustively with an extraordinary range of topics, from the political institutions of the Germanic tribes to the emergence of romantic love, that have helped shape a distinctive Western identity. And he presents the theories of scholars from Gibbon to Samuel Huntington on all of these matters as he goes along, subjecting them to a judicious and generally persuasive criticism.

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The Radical and Skeptical Traditions

WHAT EMERGES from this large survey is that there are several "Wests." Emperors, popes, kings and revolutionaries fought for different international orders, and philosophers disputed over what the outcomes of these struggles signified. "The West" is what emerged, either victorious or persuasive, at any one time. And such struggles continue in our own day.

Nonetheless, Gress selects two such "Wests" as sailing along—and by their drift revealing—the main currents of Western civilization. What he calls the "Old West" was the medieval synthesis, achieved around 1000 A.D., of three powerful civilizational forces: Roman imperial order (the memory of which inspired attempts to construct international polities like the Holy Roman Empire); the "aristocratic freedom" of the Germanic tribes (which evolved into consultative, if not democratic, methods of government); and Christianity, or what Gress calls "Christian ethnicity" (which provided otherwise different peoples with a common underlying moral and psychological outlook). Until the Reformation and the nation-state jointly overthrew it, this medieval synthesis gave rise to a broad sense of Western identity in certain classes across Europe. Paradoxically, the religious wars confirmed this, for people on both sides shared a common view of what was at stake.

If the wars of religion helped destroy the "Old West", what emerged from them was what Gress calls the "New West" of science, democracy and capitalism, which is essentially the same modern West that recently won the Cold War. But was this New West an outgrowth of the Old? Or was it, to coin a phrase, a *novus ordo seculorum*, a historical caesura and something new under the sun? Gress argues forcefully that it grew directly out of the Old West; that, for instance, the green shoots of capitalism and democracy could be detected beneath the melting snows of the late Middle Ages.

This is a crucial dispute; even the Enlightenment—which is in effect the intellectual crystallization of the New West—expressed divided opinions on this very point. The "radical Enlightenment" of Voltaire, Rousseau and the French revolutionaries conceived modernity as something to be achieved *against* the past. The *philosophes*, for instance, saw institutional Christianity as an obstacle to political and intellectual freedom, to be either overthrown or exiled from the public square into private life by the secular power. The "skeptical Enlightenment" of Hume, Locke and Montesquieu, on the other hand, saw freedom as emerging, however imperfectly, from the practices, traditions and institutions of the Old West, including the Christian religion. "Superstition", said David Hume, "is an enemy to civil liberty, and enthusiasm a friend to it." By which he meant that evangelical Protestant sects had nurtured the kind of personality that not only demonstrated economic enterprise but also thought for itself—a truth still wreaking progress in Latin America. As David Martin's *Tongues of Fire* reminds us, Wesleyism may be the most profound, because the most personal, revolutionary force of the last three hundred years. It is, however, a revolution within tradition rather than against it.

From this point on, the battle lines were drawn between two intellectual armies defending different versions of the New West. The heirs of the skeptical Enlightenment—conservatives or classical liberals, according to taste—defended the imperfect, partial and compromised versions of democracy, science and capitalism as they emerged from history. Their opponents—radical liberals or socialists, again according to taste—demanded mint-fresh institutions of freedom that would liberate man from historical oppression (including the oppression of his own customary beliefs and practices). And because they were asking for institutions untainted by history, the latter inevitably became disenchanted with the actual institutions that stood before them and refined their aim into a some such triad as science, equality and planning.

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The first clash between these two forces outside the printed page and the lecture room was the French Revolution.

Who's In? Who's Out?

IT IS AT this point that Coker appears on the scene, rather like Pierre at the Battle of Borodino. For he opens his book with Goethe's account of his experience at the Battle of Valmy, where a professional Prussian army was soundly beaten in short order by France's revolutionary peasants. Goethe's comment on this, given to the soldiers on the evening of their defeat, was: "From this place and this time forth commences a new era in world history and you can all say that you were present at its birth." What this scene signifies for our purposes is the change from the history of events to the history of ideas.

For as well as the French Revolution, two events on either side of 1789 had raised questions about the proper limits of the West: namely, the American War of Independence and Russia's full entry into the European system (courtesy of Bonaparte). Were America and Russia genuinely Western nations? Or were they peripheral to the main plot of Western history? On top of that, the American democracy born in 1776 not only raised questions about the West's political character but initially gave misleading answers about it as well. For the American Revolution, though inspired and guided by the ideas of the skeptical Enlightenment, was widely seen at first as precursor and brother to the French Revolution, which was really the radical Enlightenment in arms. It seems clear in retrospect that 1776 was the universalization of Britain's liberal Glorious Revolution of 1688, to which both 1789 and 1917 were radical counter-revolutionary responses—with the liberal revolutions of 1989 deciding the contest, at least for the moment, in favor of 1776. But history had not clarified that in 1815. And there was one further entrant into the ideology stakes. German reactions to the French Revolution included the rise of a romantic cultural nationalism that tended to despise both Enlightenments—Anglo-American Whiggery and the French Revolution—as equally rootless and dehumanizing.

As a result, whereas the European sense of the Old West was largely unconscious insofar as it existed at all, reactions to the French and American Revolutions in Germany and elsewhere consisted *inter alia* of highly self-conscious reflections on such questions as the meaning of history, the world spirit, the distinction between a *civilisation* (French, superficial) and a *Kultur* (German, profound), and the legitimate boundaries and spiritual character of the West. In the 140 years after 1815, as Coker recounts it, the poets and philosophers of Europe devoted much thought and imagination to what the West was and what the West meant.

Clearly the West was more than Metternich's "geographical expression." But agreement ended there. And when these debates moved on to questions of power politics and cultural authenticity, these were not always clearly distinguished. Was Germany a part of the West, for instance? An influential school of German cultural nationalists, including even Thomas Mann at the time of the First World War, thought not; Germany was a community offering deeper solace to its people than the bourgeois internationalism of either the French or the Anglo-American variety. But other Germans no less concerned with cultural values, notably Nietzsche, had seen Germany as the West's central power, the one which, because of France's spiritual exhaustion, would have to take the lead in resisting czarist authoritarianism.

Was, then, Russia a part of the West? It was certainly threatening to become so by virtue of its growing power. But as early as the 1850s, the German philosopher Bruno Bauer, seeing Russia as a barrack-square society bereft of ideas and Reason, was advocating a European coalition to resist it. A century later, as we know, America was to lead such a coalition.

But, then again, was America itself a part of the West? Goethe believed so. Indeed, he

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thought it was the *future* of the West, in one of his novels dispatching as emigrants to the United States those of his characters who did not commit suicide. And slightly less farsightedly, Hegel thought that America might eventually become a decisive part of the West, but that for the foreseeable future it was on the edge of history. Spengler, however, took the common view still found among European elites that America was not a country but a mere place, "a barren field and a population of trappers drifting from town to town on the dollar hunt."

As is their wont, the Germans made a disproportionate contribution to these lofty discussions. The Anglo-Americans were still living in a splendid philosophical isolation: Americans following a destiny too manifest to debate, and the British ignoring the world spirit in their pursuit of world power. It was the French, on this occasion given foresight by their fading power, who anticipated that the United States would have to infuse cultural and political energy into a declining Europe. Coker quotes Henri Martin as fearing in the 1870s that a Russian-dominated Europe would leave America to preserve "all the higher human elements of civilization", and Jules Michelet as forecasting an "Atlantic Union" to prevent this melancholy outcome. In the event, these debates were conclusively settled in Michelet's favor by two world wars that dragged America willy-nilly into Europe, and by the Cold War, which detained her there for another fifty years. If any single moment was the West's rendezvous with destiny, it was the signing of the Atlantic Charter by Churchill and FDR on a British warship in Placentia Bay, Newfoundland in August 1941—as both our authors agree.

Interpreting Atlanticism

OR DO THEY? Both Gress and Coker attach great importance to the Atlantic Charter, but they differ seriously on its significance. In Coker's eyes, it initiated an essentially Anglo-American view of the West, which began to decay in the Sixties with the growth of a specifically continental Europeanism; in Gress' opinion, it was one important episode in the long struggle between Western traditionalists and "the children of the French Revolution"—a struggle in which the traditionalists have recently scored a great victory with the collapse of communism.

Because Coker's judgment is the more familiar one, I shall deal with it more briskly than his shrewd and sardonic argument deserves. The Atlantic Charter, in his view, was "a historical turning-point" and "a change of consciousness", but mainly for the British, less so for the Americans, and only briefly and pragmatically for the continental Europeans. France, the most independent of the European wartime allies holed up in London, did not even sign it until late in 1944. The Soviet threat ensured that Atlanticism remained a military necessity for Europe until recently. But as détente and Ostpolitik took hold in the Sixties, the concept of Europeanism advanced in tandem with them—fueled by a French intellectual tradition of anti-Americanism, growing European economic integration and the political reality that European social democracy never felt entirely comfortable with American capitalism. By the late 1980s, as John Laughland pointed out in *The Tainted Source: The Undemocratic Origins of the European Idea* (1997), the rhetorical attacks of French politicians on the "Anglo-Saxons" and their liberal system of trade and capital movements bore a curious resemblance to what Vichy politicians were saying in the early Forties.

It is a mystery why American statesmen were so slow to see the Europeanist threat to Atlanticism, and Coker has some fun reversing the usual finger-pointing. Instead of blaming the British for missing the European bus, he argues that they accurately divined its anti-American (or at least its Americo-skeptical) implications early on. It was successive American leaders—including such respected figures as George Ball—who rashly poohpoohed these warnings in their eagerness to

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shovel Britain into what is now the European Union. (Only Henry Kissinger expressed serious public anxieties on that score.) Their calculation was that British membership would ensure that Europe became a more reliable U.S. ally; but at present it looks more likely that Europe will make Britain a less reliable U.S. ally.

That may not matter to Americans overmuch, Coker speculates, since the United States itself is losing its eighteenth-century Western identity as a result of mass immigration from Third World countries, the spread of bilingualism and multiculturalism, and the failure or refusal of America's elites to insist on assimilation. It is therefore losing also the sense that its primary defense and diplomatic commitment must be to Europe. Even the prospect of European protectionism is dismissed as unimportant by Coker since America has already forged strong trade links with the rest of the world—though the "Asian contagion" may upset that particular calculation. On this view America is becoming, or may have already become, a different civilization from that of Europe—what James Kurth in these pages has called "the post-West"—and so the two sides of the Atlantic are increasingly likely to part company politically too.

MR. GRESS HAS a very different, and original, interpretation of the Atlantic Charter. He sees it as an amalgam: an expression of the values of the New West as represented by the skeptical Enlightenment and as influenced by the circumstances of 1939-41. It proclaimed national self-determination, democracy, free trade and collective security—the causes that the interwar years were thought to have neglected or betrayed. And although the Charter was signed two months after Hitler's invasion of Russia, this was also the political program that the Western democracies had formulated in opposition to *both* totalitarian dictatorships, united after 1939 by the Nazi-Soviet pact. What would later be fully articulated as "anti-totalitarianism" was implicit in the principles outlined at Placentia Bay. Moreover, by bringing America into the contest, at least in spirit, the Atlantic Charter was giving new energy to this traditional West, since the Americans still had that confidence in freedom, democracy, capitalism and the future that had begun to wither in Europe.

But once the alliance with the Soviet Union was entrenched, it inevitably transformed the West's view of "what we are fighting for." Christianity and capitalism, for instance, could hardly be the war aims of an alliance that included the Soviet Union, and capitalism was at least seen at the time as compatible with the genocidal West represented by Hitler. Indeed, the very notion of the West was compromised, because Hitler claimed to be fighting for it against our new Soviet allies. So anti-totalitarianism was replaced by what Gress calls "the anti-fascist mindset." In place of the now compromised triad of science, democracy and capitalism, for instance, the Soviets proclaimed science, equality and rational planning, a substitution designed to delight the "children of the French Revolution" in Europe. Indeed, as the "anti-fascist mindset" spread during the war, it seemed to many that the true West must include the Soviets and *exclude* capitalism and Christianity. A West that made the opposite choices would be plainly tainted with fascism.

The result is described by Gress:

> The argument over Western identity was thus between those who identified the West with America—the commercial republic with its Christian foundations—and those whose idea of the West rejected Christianity and capitalism and looked rather to the ideals of progress and social transformation that they believed had been at least partly realized in the Soviet Union.

Admittedly, there were socialist factions and individual intellectuals—the Bevanite Labour Left, George Orwell—who urged an early Third Way, arguing that either Britain or a new united Europe should pioneer the combination of socialism and democracy as a

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civilized alternative to totalitarian Scylla and capitalist Charybdis. But even the Attlee government, which might theoretically have favored it, saw this as a distraction from the urgent tasks of rebuilding the postwar European economies and organizing resistance to the Soviets. As the illusory nature of this Third Way became clear, its supporters either gave their backing to the American-led democracies, like Orwell, or became "neutralist" with a bias toward the "socialist" world.

Thus began what might be called a cold civil war in the West, in which anti-Americanism always enjoyed substantial support among West European intellectuals. From 1941 to 1947 admiration for Soviet wartime heroism ensured that the anti-fascist version of the West was largely dominant. Between 1947 and 1968 fear of the Soviet Union became a paramount factor in Western opinion, the concept of anti-totalitarianism was dusted off, and the West united politically and to an extent even intellectually under American leadership. Then, the Vietnam War concentrated attention on America's flaws, and for twenty years after 1968 there was a sustained campaign against America, and later the West generally, represented as the enemies of mankind politically, economically and ecologically.

Finally, without this campaign having abated even slightly, the Soviet Union suddenly collapsed. This discredited for the moment the economic and political claims of the radical Enlightenment, installed America as a hegemonic power in both the West and the world, and gave immense prestige to the New West ideals of democracy, science and free markets. By any standards this was a world-historical victory—yet one, as Gress concedes, that was curiously muted by the West's own moral self-doubt, and in danger of being drowned out by the unabated cries of environmentalists, multiculturalists and fifty-seven varieties of anti-Western criticism.

These are very different analyses and they dictate very different prescriptions. Coker, suspecting that the West is losing its internal cultural coherence and is doomed to split politically into rival continents, thinks that in this weakened condition it had better reach some kind of multicultural bargain with other civilizations. Gress sees America as the heartland of a New West with an irreducible minimum of cultural identity that cannot and ought not be dissolved into a vague multicultural universalism. And so he concludes that in a world of clashing civilizations, it has an unavoidable interest in maintaining the habits and structures of political cooperation.[1]

Alternative Futures

NEITHER LINE of argument is entirely satisfactory. Coker claims that none of the usual suspects—China and fundamentalist Islam, for example—in the police line-up of anti-Western challenges is likely to be sufficiently threatening to persuade the West to rediscover its sense of common purpose. But the chapter discussing such vast subjects is too sketchy to be persuasive, and Coker is forced to leave extremely important questions hanging in the air. For instance: "China may emerge as a fully modern state or dissolve into a vast Third World country." True enough, but the West will hardly be unaffected by which it is. If Coker seems unaffected himself, it is because he thinks that the world has moved beyond old-fashioned power politics, making a revived Western coalition an inappropriate, if not unavailable, form of geopolitics. The West's next task is to engage in a constructive dialogue with other civilizations in order to help construct a new world culture.

It is hard to know what to make of this. To begin with, it is largely unnecessary to

[1]There are some parallels between this dispute and the differences between Francis Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington, but Coker has less confidence than Fukuyama that any world culture would be essentially Western. Hence his belief in the necessity of a multicultural bargain between the West and the Rest.

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instruct the West to act in the wider international interest. Except in occasional articles and speeches by some over-muscular neoconservatives, the West has not displayed any marked civilizational egoism in recent years. At least as led by the United States, it has sought in its policies on trade and international economics to accommodate, and even advance, the legitimate interests of other parts of the world. One large exception and one important qualification must be attached to this general rule. The exception has been Europe's Common Agricultural Policy; but that has ignored the interests of the United States, Australia and New Zealand as much as it has those of the Third World, and is therefore a factor in the dissolution rather than the expansion of the West. The qualification is that while the West may have accommodated other interests, it has done so in the light of its own values—notably free trade and human rights.

A new world culture would presumably correct that bias, would it not? Again, however, what would such a culture look like? Cultures are made up of such intractable components as language and religion. Always a magpie civilization itself, the West has been happy to appropriate religious styles, foreign words and all kinds of ambient cultural bric-a-brac. But more than that is unlikely. It is hard enough to interest many Westerners in their own religions, let alone Asian or African ones, and with the rise of Christian and Muslim "enthusiasm", religion is more likely to be a source of cultural conflict than of accommodation. As for language, the tongue most likely to be the basis of any world culture is English, which, even granting such developments as the "post-colonial novel", implies the opposite of a Western retreat. Is Coker, then, more concerned with strictly political and economic values? If so, the problem becomes still more perplexing. Strip political authoritarianism from "Asian values" and what is left sounds suspiciously like the "Victorian values"—hard work, law and order, good schools and a decent family life—of no less Western a figure than Lady Thatcher.

But political authoritarianism, having just been defeated after a long struggle within the West, is unlikely to be openly embraced by even the most masochistic multiculturalist. Its inconsistency with the liberty at the heart of the West is too blatant. What follows, surely, is that any halfway realistic prescription for a world culture must avoid the cultural fundamentals derived from the Old West, and stick instead to the New West's outward signs of inward grace—democracy, free markets and the scientific method—which can be represented as the heritage of all mankind.

THE RESULTING paradox we might call "Western universalism", and this turns out to be one of the main targets against which Gress aims the last rounds in his Maxim gun. And indeed he directs devastating fire at a bewildering variety of targets in his final two chapters: postmodernists, multiculturalists, environmentalists, communitarians, post-materialists, transcendental humanists, Islamists, the Singapore school and several others besides. Most of these schools of thought come under the heading of anti-Western Westerners, the great-grandchildren of the French Revolution, who have adopted the intellectual methods of Marxism but abandoned social class for the environment, race or gender as the grounds for attack on the West. Gress demolishes their arguments with a fine painstaking zest. His comprehensive diligence reminds me of the British Conservative Party's *Campaign Guide*, which used to be issued to canvassers and which contained full and complete answers to every possible question that might be posed on the doorstep. But this comprehensiveness sometimes risks obscuring the outlines of his main argument: a critique of so-called Western universalism.

He argues that it is in the first instance a kind of hallucination. Other civilizations may seem to have adopted Westernization, but the likelihood is that unless they actually cease to be themselves, they have merely taken over the technical knowledge and procedural rules

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of Western culture. They may institute free-market capitalism, and do so successfully, but will they prove as capable of habitual innovation? They may have procedures for voting, but will that result in a routine transfer of power from government to opposition? He concludes that the world outside the West is likely to see the spread of capitalism but not of democracy, and that this process should therefore be called modernization rather than Westernization.

Even this limited adoption of Western institutions will make other civilizations richer and stronger. But as Samuel Huntington points out, that will have the perverse result of making them more anti-Western as well. They will certainly be more resistant to Western cultural hegemony. Already, many Muslims believe that they have learned to combine Western techniques with the greater spiritual and civilizational powers of Islam. Far from converging, therefore, civilizations will tend to grow apart, with the rest becoming "more modern and less Western", in Huntington's words. The end result will be a world of five or six major civilizations, all of which are rich and powerful in varying degrees, but which remain foreign, mysterious and even suspect to each other.

That being so, the West will have a strong incentive to retain some sort of organizational unity and to remain distinctively Western in spirit and culture. As Gress says exasperatedly at one point, in what might almost be a direct reply to Coker, "A multicultural West is a contradiction in terms; the only West that can be accommodating to other cultures is a West that knows itself and, on the strength of that understanding, encounters others."

What would such a West be like? It would recognize itself, in Gress' words, as "the obedient child of the Old West." Among other qualities, it would have a place for religion, above all Christianity, in its self-image; it would understand that capitalism was not democracy's antagonist but that they were mutually dependent; and it would know that liberty was safest in pluralistic societies "where several govern." As at the signing of the Atlantic Charter, this unmistakably describes a West that includes—and indeed is led by—America, the strategic heartland where Christianity and capitalism still retain considerable, if reduced, self-confidence and popularity.

There could hardly be two more contrary conclusions. Coker thinks that the Western Brothers have quarreled so irrevocably that there is nothing for it but for them to divide the estate and go out to seek profitable alliances with their former retainers. Gress thinks that the hostility of those beyond the Pale will force the family to stick together under the slightly austere Uncle Sam, who, culturally if not fiscally speaking, has saved and invested more, and partied less, than his improvident relatives. And although both writers concede that the future is unknowable, that will not go far in reconciling their differences.

But perspective may lend a hand here. Coker is pessimistic about a West that began to be imagined about the time of Valmy, was realized in 1941, and started to break apart in the Sixties with the establishment of "Europe." Gress' Europe started to coalesce in the Dark Ages, emerged in its modern divided self at about the time of Valmy, and has been both growing in power and wracked by civil wars ever since. It is understandable that Coker should look at present political trends and conclude that they point clearly to the West's dissolution, and equally reasonable that Gress should see them as yet another, perhaps extended, episode in the long struggle between the mainstream Western tradition and its internal enemies. And in the timescale in which they pitch their forecasts, both may even be right.

The case for Coker's predictions makes itself. The evidence is before our eyes in such signs as the boasts of European politicians that the euro will shortly rival the dollar as top currency; the spread of multiculturalism, bilingualism and a deracinated history in the schools; the drive for a militarily pointless but politically significant "European defense iden-

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tity" in NATO; the divergence between the United States and the European Union over American sanctions on Cuba and Iran; the EU's restrictions on American cultural imports; and much else. *National Interest* readers have already seen the case that Atlantic arrangements are destined to erode in the post-Cold War world argued ably and briskly by Stephen Walt in "The Ties That Fray: Why Europe and America Are Drifting Apart" (Winter 1998/99). Coker's additional point is that these ties began to fray while the Soviet threat was still an incentive for cooperation and that they therefore signify a much deeper civilizational divide. If Gress is to convince us otherwise, he has to point to less obtrusive trends that are likely to draw America and Europe together over the long haul.

THESE ARE NOT hard to find. To begin with, the West, which was linguistically balkanized one generation ago, is now increasingly united by a single language. English is the language of business, the airline industry, practical diplomacy, Hollywood and the Internet. It has even been given official status by the EU. To be sure, English is also shared with many non-Westerners, but that does not diminish its force as a factor fostering Atlantic cultural unity. Cultural unity does not, of course, preclude passionate disputes; indeed, it practically guarantees them, as Shaw's remark about Americans and British being divided by a single language recognizes. The quality of Atlantic culture, especially its pop-cultural side, is one indictment in Europe's charge-sheet against the United States. But these atrocities are of concern to Americans as much as to Europeans, and the official European response—to subsidize even worse local imitations of American trash—hardly improves matters. Moreover, the concept of Atlantic culture is not exhausted by television sitcoms and Hollywood "slasher" movies. English also fosters the development of an Atlantic public opinion and consciousness. Through magazines like *The Economist* and newspapers like the *Financial Times*, we are all aware of the same information and all concerned about the same controversies. Inevitably, this political culture is often superficial, but that is in part because Atlantic cultural unity is in its early stages.

Religion is another source of Western unity—or at least no longer a barrier to it. Most commentators focus on such obstacles to a strong West as growing secularism, the divide between secular elites and the Religious Right, and the allegedly similar divide between a post-Christian Europe and a still-Christian America. But these are emotionally mild conflicts compared to those between different Western religions in the recent past. Even as late as the Forties, there were deep and bitter divisions between different Protestant denominations, let alone between Catholics and Protestants and Christians and Jews. And these translated into significant national religious differences between, say, Protestant England and Catholic France. But movements like Christian ecumenism and the Jewish-Christian dialogue have healed these divisions to an extent that would have astonished our grandparents.

Nor does secularism enjoy a settled victory either in Europe or among America's elites. "Modern man" is a creature shaped largely by agnostic philosophers and liberal theologians who created him in their own image. Church attendance may be down in most countries, but opinion polls show a large residue of Christian and other religious beliefs in European populations. The United States is experiencing a religious revival that some observers compare to the Great Awakenings. Above all, the supposed link between modernity and secularism is a fragile one. It may apply, for instance, to the liberal humanities, but it does not seem to hold for the physical and technical sciences. Evangelical Christians are apparently found in large numbers at the cutting-edge of science and technology, and America is not only more religious than Europe, it is also more advanced in the new

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applied sciences. It would not be surprising if even agnostic sectors of society were to be influenced over time by this evidence of worldly accomplishment—which would soothe another cultural tension in Euro-American relations. But in any event secularism seems unlikely to divide the West in the way that earlier religious differences did.

Political divisions are, of course, more eternal than religious ones. And the division between American capitalism and European social democracy, though largely a matter of degree, is now of fifty years standing. But it must be qualified by three new divisions that currently fracture Western politics. The first of these is the latest incarnation of the conflict between the skeptical and radical Enlightenments; let us call it the battle between the West and the post-West. This is a struggle over, among other things, the meaning of democracy. As the scholar John Fonte has pointed out, the traditional Western view of liberal democracy is now being challenged by advocates of "cultural democracy", who would replace individual rights with group rights, majority rule with "fancy franchises", and individual merit with ethnic proportionalism. Indeed, gender proportionalism would trump even popular democratic elections, since the voters would have to choose a parliament composed 50 percent of women.

Supporters of cultural democracy are now entrenched in national and international bureaucracies, and are the main source of activist energy in parties of the Left. But they are as likely to be found in Washington as in Paris; this is a conflict within Western nations rather than between them. It is also a fairly mild conflict compared to the murderous ideological battles that have disfigured this century. If cultural democrats are Bolsheviks, they are Bolsheviks acting within the restraints of formal democracy. But then—to borrow from Marx—socialism repeats itself: the first time as genocide, the second time as therapy.

The second division has opened up because cultural democrats are opposed, or at least hampered, by their allies in social democratic parties who retain, or have recovered, a faith in the New West triad of democracy, capitalism and science. These are the advocates of the Third Way, which, when it is not mere blather (which it is most of the time), is an attempt to reconcile the social democratic parties with the West, correcting the mistaken policy of the postwar Left of maintaining a high-minded neutrality between Western freedom and Soviet socialism. This task is made much easier by the economic and social progress of the last fifty years. The original advocates of a Third Way, like Orwell, could point to real hardship in capitalist societies that had very modest nets of social welfare. By the end of the Cold War, the conservative parties in America and Western Europe were advocates and custodians of extensive welfare arrangements. Indeed, one reason why the Blairite Third Way sometimes seems so thin is that it claims to occupy a distinctive position on the ideological spectrum (free markets plus state safety nets) where in fact even the Thatcherites perched quite comfortably. But admittedly, what is bad argument may be good politics.

And the third division is that between the postwar West and the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. As Gress points out, the end of communist rule led to a revival of classical liberal thought in the new democracies. The need for new constitutions led to politicians reading Burke, Montesquieu, Constant and the *Federalist Papers* for the first time, and drawing on such ideas as the separation of powers. The experience of the planned economy persuaded them of the virtues of free-market capitalism. Although these countries all want to be part of "Europe", their leaders also look for guidance, example and protection to the United States. And they have not had their freedom long enough to become disenchanted with the future. They may be closer geographically to Western Europe, but politically and philosophically they are America's natural friends. So their entry into the Western community, far from

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introducing a difficult cultural challenge as Coker seems to suggest at one stage, is likely to strengthen the West by reducing the net amount of anti-Americanism in Europe.

On balance these new political trends seem likely to moderate rather than aggravate existing tensions between America and Europe. But these may look more threatening at present than over the long run because they are the result in part of the West's overwhelming dominance in the world. It is, after all, the bloc led by the world's only superpower, and as such plainly feels that it can enjoy the luxury of internal rivalry and dissent, just as the variations on postmodernism within the academy testify to a society that is rich and secure enough to afford almost any frivolity.

But this present dominance is an extraordinary and probably temporary state of affairs. No one can forecast the precise coalition of civilizations, nations or sub-national forces that might pose a serious threat to Western interests in the future. Such a coalition is, however, a moral certainty at some time. And when it arrives, the West is likely to exist as a civilizational, economic and political coalition and as at least a potential military one. That is not everything of course; but it is quite a lot. □

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Paper Bear

Anatol Lieven

William E. Odom, *The Collapse of the Soviet Military* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 480 pp., $35.

IN THE twentieth century, and as far as I am aware in all history, there have been only two cases of the overwhelmingly non-violent abandonment of what had been a vast empire: the British and the Soviet/Russian. Of these, the latter was, on the face of it, by far the more surprising. The British Empire had been gravely weakened by the Second World War, which Britain had effectively lost before she was saved by the Soviet Union and the United States. Even before that war broke out, the British Empire in India at least had been badly undermined by Indian nationalism and the ostensibly liberal and democratic ideology of the British people and state. Having lost India—the strategic, economic and emotional core of the Empire—the expensive, irrelevant bits and bobs that remained hardly seemed worth saving, even if Britain had been economically capable of doing so. The Suez debacle cruelly underlined the new realities. In the final steps, imperial retreat was crucially affected by the deep unpopularity in the electorate of using military conscripts for imperial policing duties.

The Soviet Union, by contrast, was not supposedly burdened by a sense of liberal conscience or by democratic pressure from the population. In the common Western analysis of the 1980s—and to a very considerable degree in reality—the population of its empire was thoroughly insulated from subversive ideas by the totalitarian state; for the same reason, the communist ideology, however tarnished in the eyes of East Europeans, continued to hold sway over the population of the Soviet Union itself. The economy, however grotesquely incompetent compared to that of the West, could go on providing living standards that were not only adequate in

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themselves, but so obviously superior to those of the previous generation as to constitute a source of legitimacy.

Finally, the huge Soviet armed forces, though falling behind the West technologically, were more than adequate not only to repel any outside attack (had any been likely) but to suppress any conceivable mass discontent within the empire. And they were supposedly adequate not just in terms of weapons and numbers, but in terms of moral readiness, ideological commitment and disciplined obedience to the orders of the state.

WHY THE SOVIET military didn't assert itself in the years leading to the Soviet Union's disintegration is the essential question that Lt. General William E. Odom seeks to answer in his latest book, *The Collapse of the Soviet Military*. This impressive work is the most comprehensive and serious study of its subject to date, and probably will remain so for a considerable time to come. It is distinguished by its intelligent analysis, extremely interesting and revealing personal sources, and frequently even by its objectivity and balance. This was something of a surprise, because in contemplating General Odom's long and distinguished career as a soldier, an analyst and director of the National Security Agency, balance and objectivity concerning the Soviet Union and Russia are not necessarily the first virtues that come to mind.

The first quality of General Odom's account, however, stems from his past obsessions, and that is that it takes Soviet communist ideology and its role in the armed forces seriously. In doing so, his work on this occasion distinguishes itself both from the old Western "convergence" school, which saw the Soviet system and that of the West as growing more and more alike, and those historicists who regard the Soviet Union, and especially Soviet external policy, as overwhelmingly a continuation of Russian national and imperial traditions. Odom stresses the importance of Marxism-Leninism, inculcated in the military by the Party's military representatives, the 80,000-strong corps of political officers (*zampolits*, formerly *politruks*), in shaping not only the armed forces' overall vision of the world and ambition for something like world conquest, but also their specific attitudes to the waging of war (out of Clausewitz via Marx and Lenin). Moreover, the doctrine of inevitable hostility and rivalry between capitalism and communism was so fundamental a part of the state and military ideology that when Gorbachev replaced it with his talk of "common human interests" and "the common European home", it unraveled the *raison d'être* of both state and military, in a way unimaginable for any non-ideological state. As Odom writes:

> The role of the official ideology was critically important for the military's own justifications and claims on resources. Certainly it changed over time, especially in the post-Stalin period, but it was not becoming irrelevant, as sometimes believed. Rather, it was increasingly internalized. Hypocrisy and corruption certainly endangered it, but that was true in Stalin's time.

Marxism-Leninism led the Soviet Union into ideologically-based adventures in Africa, Cuba and elsewhere, which strained still further its inadequate economic capacity and led to heavy investment in a "blue water" navy of no real strategic worth. These moves in the 1970s contributed directly to the Reagan administration's decision to launch a massive U.S. high-tech armament program with which the Soviet Union could not compete, and which was probably the key factor in persuading Gorbachev to launch his reforms, and the party and military hierarchies to support them.

Of course, it is entirely true that, long before Gorbachev came to power, very few Soviet people, civilian or military, felt the really fervent communist faith of the early Soviet years, and that for soldiers what counted was Soviet patriotism rather than communism as such. But then again, communism was an essential part of Soviet patriotism, historically coterminous with the Soviet state. As the

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event proved, when communism collapsed, neither the state itself nor its armed forces could long survive. In Odom's words, "By 1987, [Gorbachev] had promulgated revisions in the official ideology that effectively destroyed the traditional method of defining the Soviet Union's main adversaries"; and again, "To have adopted deterrence theory and its concepts of what constitutes military stability would have required Soviet leaders to abandon the ideological foundations of their state's legitimacy and purpose."

The Soviet Union could have survived far longer of course had it not been for Eastern Europe. In most of the Soviet Union itself, it is not wholly true that, in Odom's words, the military was "the embodiment of the creation, sovereignty and stability of the Soviet Empire", or at least it was only true insofar as the military was "a component of the Communist Party." The army in fact was never used for the purpose of domestic repression under Brezhnev, in part because the only post-Stalinist use of the military for that purpose—at Novocherkassk in 1962, when soldiers fired on protesting workers—had been so bitterly unpopular with the armed forces that it had seriously alarmed the regime. By contrast, the ultimate military basis of Soviet domination of Eastern Europe had been obvious at least since 1956.

In this context, one factor in the Soviet collapse that Odom rather surprisingly fails to mention is Poland. In 1981, the threat of Soviet invasion was still just real enough to persuade General Jaruzelski to impose a state of emergency and suppress Solidarity. But as we now know, the Soviet regime and armed forces themselves were desperately unwilling actually to launch such an invasion, and had not in fact made up their minds whether they could do so. They were well aware that a repeat of Hungary in 1956 (for much of the Polish army would certainly have fought back) would have had the most catastrophic effect on their international position as well as on internal dissent and military morale. The Jaruzelski military regime, however, was clearly a stopgap, a desperate attempt to buy time by replacing party with military authority in the hope that, somehow, the economy would grow enough to buy off worker discontent.

As the 1980s progressed, it became increasingly clear that this hope was a chimera, and that sooner or later massive political discontent was bound to resurface again in Poland, facing the Soviet regime and armed forces with the same dilemma as before. This was an additional reason why Gorbachev felt he was racing against time to carry out serious reforms; but it was also true that the decision peacefully to abandon Eastern Europe in 1989-90 had to some extent been prefigured by the hesitation over Poland in 1980-81. Indeed, the looming threat of another Polish revolt is one reason why we may doubt Odom's suggestion that, had it not been for Gorbachev, the Soviet Union could have survived for several more decades.

ODOM DOES, however, do justice to another episode of great importance, the war in Afghanistan. He describes the increasing demoralization, drug addiction and corruption of the troops in ways that do indeed suggest that this was "Russia's Vietnam." The unclear goals and prolonged suffering of that war helped give General Lebed and other officers, like their U.S. counterparts, a permanent distaste for such operations. Odom quotes the book by Gorbachev's aide, Anatoly Chernyayev, stating that the issue of war was placed on the general secretary's agenda as soon as he took office, by a "deluge of letters" to the Soviet leadership from servicemen and their families calling for its immediate end. This is even more revealing than Odom himself perhaps realizes; for it indicates that Soviet society was becoming culturally demilitarized, and no longer instinctively loyal to the state's military goals. The fact that people felt able to write such letters also of course shows the relative loosening of Soviet police control, even before Gorbachev launched his reforms.

At the core of Odom's book is a detailed,

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almost blow-by-blow account of the relationship between Gorbachev and the military, from the awareness of growing U.S. superiority that helped trigger the reforms, through the struggles over disarmament talks in the middle and late Eighties, the increasing use of the military for internal security, and the August coup, to the shattering of military unity and the final collapse. Much of his account is based on his own conversations with leading Soviet military and civilian figures, both at the time of the events themselves and subsequently. His access to these figures is one of the book's great strengths, both in terms of argument and vivid narrative.

One very important point to emerge is Gorbachev's complete ignorance of military affairs. From the mid-Eighties, this ignorance translated into almost active hostility. On top of the military's drain on state resources and resistance to reform came the humiliation of the Mathias Rust affair of May 1987, when a German student pilot landed a propeller-driven plane on Red Square after penetrating all the Soviet air defenses. This both infuriated Gorbachev and gave him the chance to replace hardline conservatives in the high command. However, instead of appointing young, committed military reformers, Gorbachev, whether out of calculation, ignorance or indifference, replaced them with undistinguished, safe, middle of the road figures like Marshal Yazov, who (he may have calculated) were no threat to his position. But they were also incapable of instituting real change. As Odom correctly notes, Gorbachev was the first Soviet leader to have had no direct military experience (all of his predecessors had served as military commissars in the Civil War or the Second World War); and paradoxically, despite the highly militarized nature of the Soviet system, it was also highly compartmentalized, so that Party and State officials outside the military field could well pursue their entire careers without having to gain even the most superficial knowledge of military affairs.

This is a pattern that repeated itself under Boris Yeltsin. Neither he, nor the "young reformers" like Gaidar and Chubais, nor Chernomyrdin, had any experience of working in or with the military, and until very recently showed no serious interest whatsoever in military affairs. Instead, most of Yeltsin's military appointments appear to have been made with only two considerations in mind: personal loyalty to Yeltsin, and a quiet life.

As the Soviet system crumbled, the distance between the political and military leaderships was vastly widened by the use of the army as a "force of order" in Tbilisi, Baku, Vilnius and elsewhere. The soldiers—and especially the elite paratroops, who were used on all three occasions—noted with intense bitterness the way in which Gorbachev and the Politburo had ordered them to use force (but only verbally, never in writing) and then, when the operations proved bitterly unpopular, had sought to shuffle responsibility onto the military. This background played a critically important part in the behavior of the military during the coup of August 1991, which Odom describes in very useful detail. Unlike their equivalents in Pakistan, Chile and elsewhere, the vast majority's greatest concern was not to preserve the Soviet state but to keep out of politics. Hatred of Gorbachev personally for his repeated "betrayals" of the military also contributed greatly to the people's willingness to listen to Yeltsin's duplicitous and opportunist promises.

BOTH Odom's narrative and his conclusions on most of the themes of his book are eminently sound. While some of his arguments sound like special pleading for his past positions, this does not always invalidate them. Thus although he greatly exaggerates the ability of political authorities to force modern soldiers to fight, Odom is correct in saying that even the manifold weaknesses of the Soviet armed forces might not have stopped them from launching an initially successful offensive into Western Europe—though he certainly exaggerates the potential political will to do any such thing. He is sound on the internal rot of the armed forces

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from bullying, demoralization and corruption, though he could have said a good deal more about the impact of a general demilitarization of attitudes throughout Soviet society, a feature that the Soviet Union in its last decades—and contemporary Russia—has of course shared with the modern West.[1]

Nonetheless, it must be said that General Odom in the past has linked his name to some of the grossest Western exaggerations of both Soviet and Russian military capacity and, by implication, intentions as well. I vividly remember how, on arriving in Washington early in 1996, after more than a year of covering the Chechen War, I found Odom still arguing in print that too many lessons should not be drawn from Chechnya, that Russia had not used its best units there and that it still had formidable offensive units in reserve—all of which was nonsense and had been shown to be such by Western reporters who had actually witnessed the war on the ground. And during Odom's time with the National Security Council, his portrayals both of the Soviet Union's civil defense capacity and of the military potential of the DOSAF (the Voluntary Society for the Support of the Army and Fleet) reserve training scheme were among the most inaccurate pieces of Western analysis of Soviet military realities. Odom argues that it all turned out for the best because higher U.S. military spending to meet the Soviet threat eventually forced Gorbachev to begin his reforms—and there is a great deal of truth in this. But that is not how the argument for higher spending was presented to the American people, and if Odom really believed his arguments of the time, he was in serious error, and he should now have the grace to acknowledge that.

Finally, I must say that having read 398 pages of Odom's book with great admiration, the last six reminded me why he and those like him are still to be treated with caution. Having spent much of his book convincingly demonstrating just what was so very unusual about the Soviet ideology, state, economy and armed forces, at the very end he launches into a hurried, shallow and deeply unconvincing attempt to show why all this was part of structural patterns in Russian history supposedly going back to "the late fifteenth century." God help us, he even includes that most shopworn and empty of all clichés, which can now be heard trotting along several pages in advance: Gogol's inevitable *troika*.

This sort of historicizing seems to be almost a psychological compulsion with many writers on Russia, as if, say, no account of contemporary U.S. foreign policy could be complete without a reference to King Philip's War, or of French without an analysis of Richelieu's German policy. In part it is the result of sheer ignorance on the part of Soviet and Russian specialists who simply do not know enough about other parts of the world and their histories to make valid comparisons outside the Russian field. This is a pity, because in many other ways Odom's account is a model of its kind. □

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[1]See my *Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), chapter 5, for an analysis of this process.

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Pericles *and* "Big Bill" Thomson

Clifford Orwin

James W. Ceaser, *Reconstructing America: The Symbol of America in Modern Thought* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 292 pp., $30.

CANADIAN couch potatoes naturally enjoy curling up with a book attacking the United States; the more fit among us even enjoy writing them. It is unclear how large a market James Ceaser can expect to command up here in my adopted country, as he has gone so far as to write a book *repelling* criticism of the United States. If it's any consolation, what at first appears a resounding vindication proves in the end a somewhat ambiguous one.

In *Reconstructing America*, Ceaser sets out to defend "the real America" against the symbolic one. By the "symbolic" (or sometimes "metaphysical") America he means the United States treated as a symbol of something other than itself, of something "grotesque, obscene, monstrous, stultifying, stunted, leveling, deadening, deracinating, rootless, uncultured." This symbolic America is closely associated with the notion of "Americanization", "which refers to such fundamental developments of modernity as cultural homogenization, democratization, and degeneration." "Once this point is reached, it is clear that the real America is no longer at issue: an idea or symbol called 'America' has taken over." Symbols matter, however; indeed they matter very much, and this one, according to Ceaser, has proved pernicious at home as well as abroad. For American intellectuals, particularly those denizens of the university who practice "cultural studies", have taken the symbolic America to their bosoms. "One objective of this book is to free the real from the symbolic America, thus liberating a country from the mastery of a metaphor and the tyranny of a trope."

What is most significant about the real America, according to Ceaser, is the ideal to which it is dedicated. The question at issue between America and its critics is nothing less than that of the possibility of genuine republican self-government among human beings, whether, as the authors of *The Federalist* put it, "societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice, or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force." In a move that will startle some readers, Ceaser proudly identifies himself with his discipline of political science, and offers its insights as the counterpoise to the "symbolic" America. By political science, however, Ceaser does not mean the positivistic scientism current in departments of that name. He means the science of the American Founders, not academic but statesmanlike, aspiring not to precision but to prudence. "In seeking to free the real America from the symbolic America, I am also hoping to restore political science to its rightful place in our way of thinking. The two objectives are parts of the same enterprise."

Ceaser's concern is not to refute every criticism ever urged against America. He writes "not with the intention of defending everything American (for an unreflective patriotism can be almost as harmful as a reflexive hostility to one's country), but with the aim of removing the prejudices that prevent us from clearly assessing our situation." Chief among

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these prejudices is "the abandonment of political science as the intellectual guide for political actions." This is the error common to the various versions of the symbolic America, and it is fraught with dangers.

> [Whenever] an alternative discipline [has taken] the place of political science, either reducing politics to the subpolitical (for example, natural history) or elevating politics to the suprapolitical (for example, the movement of History), the result was disastrous.

Ceaser has in mind racialism in the first case and fascism, communism and Heideggerian existentialism—itself both anti-liberal and anti-democratic—in the second. He argues that the genuinely political understanding of freedom supporting the real America is not only more ennobling but more moderate than those promoted by the purveyors of the symbolic America.

CEASER FIRST takes up the threat to the autonomy and sovereignty of politics emanating from determinisms of nature. His account begins with the claim of eighteenth-century French natural historians, including the illustrious Buffon, that in the Western Hemisphere all organisms including human ones were inferior to their European counterparts. For climatic reasons (excessive humidity was the favorite hypothesis) it was alleged that everything in America dwindled. This thesis must strike us as bizarre, indeed ludicrous. Americans remember it, if they do at all, primarily because leading Americans of that day felt bound to reply to it—most notably Jefferson in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*.

For Ceaser, however, this episode is more than an historical curiosity. It set the pattern for the symbolic America. It also marked the irruption into European (and even American) thought of a pernicious biologism. For Jefferson, in refuting the comprehensive climatic determinism of his adversaries, substituted a partially racial one. While denying that the white or red inhabitants of the New World were inferior as claimed, he conceded that the black ones were, but for reasons of race rather than climate. While manifesting the greatest respect for Jefferson as a political thinker, Ceaser deeply regrets this fatal foray into natural history which so anticipated (and encouraged) the European and American racialism of the nineteenth century and beyond.

To the thus only partly political understanding of Jefferson, Ceaser opposes the thoroughly political one of *The Federalist*. James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, in their joint capacity as Publius, are the true heroes of Ceaser's account. They too saw fit to address the degeneracy thesis, in *Federalist* 11, which Ceaser describes as "one of the most splendid texts in American political literature." They did so, however, in a wholly political manner, which "rejected any pretension of natural history to be a valid social science."

> *The Federalist* stresses the common nature of human beings. Hamilton proposes overcoming the arrogant pretensions of the European, not by complaining of unjust hegemony or by claiming the status of victim . . . but by accomplishing an objective [sc., the establishment of republican government] that will surpass anything achieved by those who believe they rank higher on the scale of human biology.

When Ceaser turns to the nineteenth century, the symbolic America to which he devotes the most attention is that of Gobineau. The elaborator of a race-based social science that he claimed held the key to understanding the human past as well as to predicting the human future, Gobineau was to exert an immense influence on the racists who followed him, including Hitler's experts in these matters. He presented America as Exhibit A of his science of racial determinism: initially ascendant because of the predominance of the "Aryan" Anglo-Saxon race, but fated to fall into disarray due to too much mixing with inferior races both European and non-European.

Ceaser's emphasis, however, is not only on the baneful political consequences of pseudoscientific claptrap like Gobineau's, but on

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Alexis de Tocqueville's response to it. The two men carried on a lengthy correspondence, Tocqueville's side of which Ceaser offers as a shining example of a defense of the primacy of politics. Taking Tocqueville's political critique of Gobineau's racial determinism as his model, Ceaser assails Herrnstein and Murray's discussion in *The Bell Curve* of the alleged genetic component in the inferiority of black Americans to white ones.

Ceaser's discussion of racialist interpretations of America culminates in a brilliant and provocative discussion of contemporary American "multiculturalism." He acknowledges the wide range of meaning of this last term as well as the differences between multiculturalism, however understood, and classical racialism. Even so, he contends that its adherents display a disturbing tendency to break with the liberal democratic consensus of the last five decades by reintroducing race as the foundation of both civic and cultural identity. He offers a powerful critique of the multiculturalists' division of the world into the pseudopolitical categories of the Hegemon and the Other, as well as an analysis of their amazing ability to combine cultural relativism with political dogmatism. "Victimization is the transfer point where theoretical relativism is laundered and turns into moral absolutism."

IN THE SECOND half of the book Ceaser's emphasis shifts from French scientism to German historicism. It is no longer the subpolitical stratum of nature that subverts a political understanding of America and of the world in general, but the superpolitical ones of History or Fate. America figures in these various critiques as the graveyard of the hopes of humanity, the fagend of the Western political and even metaphysical traditions, a heartless technological dystopia and nightmare of sterile superficiality. The consequences for political life of such historical/metaphysical determinisms are the same as, or worse than, those of natural determinisms: a discrediting of moderate political action in favor of a debilitating pessimism, on the one hand, or an apocalyptic and irresponsible activism on the other.

In this part of his argument Ceaser focuses on Martin Heidegger and the neo-Hegelian Alexandre Kojève, whom he recognizes as by far the most formidable purveyors of this symbolic America from an historicist perspective. He attends as well to the German "revolutionary conservatives" (Spengler, Ernst Jünger et al.) who preceded and influenced Heidegger, and to our contemporaries the postmodernists who succeeded Heidegger and were influenced by him. The German-Jewish-American thinker Leo Strauss plays a part as having responded to Kojève (and implicitly to Heidegger) in defense of the primacy of politics and moderation, much as Tocqueville had responded to Gobineau.

As Ceaser is not shy about confronting multiculturalism, so he takes sharp aim at postmodernism. In particular he disputes the claim that, as the homeland of Reason and the Enlightenment, America is the relentless proponent of homogeneity and thereby the mortal enemy of "difference." While he readily acknowledges the tendencies of the radical Enlightenment toward dogmatism and even tyranny, he insists that the American founders rejected these tendencies. "The most elementary study of history teaches that [the] political science [of] the American founding produced one of the most profound criticisms of the excesses of abstract ideological thought."

Ceaser's survey of European anti-Americanism is incisive, informative and urbane. It provides an unusual but highly illuminating angle on several of the most powerful tendencies of modern thought, all of which, he shows, both share a theoretical "anti-Americanism" and foster a practical one. He is not shy about urging a return to that political science that he presents as synonymous with the genius of America.

CEASER'S achievement is impressive, but it does invite a number of questions. It is so different from what we have come to expect in a defense of the American

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way of life (from whatever point on the political spectrum) that it may well seem a brilliant *tour de force*. Let us grant that the America Ceaser defends against its sinister symbolic double is *a* real America. But is it *the* real America? Is America identical with American constitutionalism and the noble yet moderate aspiration to political liberty that animated its foremost advocates? Hasn't there been much more to the real America than this—more for better as well as for worse? A lot has happened since 1787 that can neither be subsumed under the political science of Publius nor dismissed as unreal or symbolic.

Even the Founders, after all, saw the Constitution and the political science on which it rested as appropriate to the American way of life, not as determinative of it. Given Ceaser's admiration for Tocqueville, one is struck how different are their respective approaches to the "real character of American life." Tocqueville greatly respected the Founders, but even writing in 1835 his view was that that was then, this was now. The Founders were, as human types, pre-democratic; neither their like nor their lofty conception of statesmanship would be seen again. (He was wrong, but who could blame him for not foreseeing the miracle of Abraham Lincoln?) For all Tocqueville's admiration of the American federal system, he did not regard it as the spring of American democracy. Here he followed Montesquieu and Rousseau: not laws and institutions but *moeurs* were the bedrock of political life. It was, then, to the everyday customs and usages of the Americans that Tocqueville looked. In this view Publius himself may be said to have concurred, for he stressed the "republican spirit" to which all American institutions had to conform, as he did the vigorous morality required in a republican people.

So too today, what we look for in a defense of the "real character of American life" is something more (and less) than a display of the political wisdom of the Founders. We look for a defense of that life as it is lived today, into which the Founders enter only tangentially. In an essay evoking his youth in Chicago, Saul Bellow recalls the vivid contrast between the plaster bust of Pericles in the school assembly hall and the jowly red face of Mayor "Big Bill" Thomson beneath his straw campaign boater. That contrast, it seems to me, is very much on view in Bellow's novels. The high is always present in American life (if sometimes only as a plaster cast) but the tension between high and low has pervaded that life and accounted for much of its extraordinary vitality. The populism, boosterism and graft of Big Bill are as American as the aspiration to constitutional self-government; Chicago a more American city than the Founders' Philadelphia or Charlottesville.

To which we must add that the Coca Cola Company is as much an aspect of the "real America" as separation of powers, and jazz as much a part of it as judicial review. The unfolding genius of America has been at least as manifest in the subpolitical realms of commerce and culture (and especially in the nexus of the two, à la Broadway and Hollywood) as in politics. America stands for a freedom that certainly includes self-government but presents itself most obviously today in the two guises of economic opportunity and cultural license. When my wife and I lived in Moscow in 1975, the mostly literary malcontents with whom we associated were occasionally lucky enough to be permitted a trip to the United States. The most prized trophy of such a trip was an inflatable doll from Times Square. This was not because Russian bohemians suffered from boring sex lives, but because such commercial/cultural trash symbolized for them the boundless freedom of America. There is something to be said these days for analyzing the character of American life less in terms of political conditions than of economic and cultural ones—and to hold that the truly significant strands of politics itself are those of economics and culture. (Does Ceaser disagree? Or is his book a self-conscious venture into cultural politics?)

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BUT LET US RETURN to the political domain. The greatest poet of American constitutionalism was also its greatest practitioner: Abraham Lincoln, who proclaimed the necessity of a "new birth of freedom." The work of the Founders remained to be completed, and could be preserved only by being transformed. A problem for Ceaser's thesis is that one inexpungible aspect of the American character is progressivism, and so a powerful yen to go beyond the Founders even as one honors their memory. From the outset, the country's leading political figures have advanced agendas intended to improve upon the achievement of 1787. In almost every case these agendas aimed at an increased democratization: both the "progressive" aspirations of elites and the "populist" ones of the people have proved to be in tension with constitutionalism. For all these reasons, a defense of "the real America" today may begin but it cannot end with a vindication of the Founders.

Be this as it may, Ceaser's fine book underscores a striking anomaly. On the one hand, the United States was the first modern nation, not least because of its reliance on a new political science that was the fruit of modern reflection. On the other, the presumption of the autonomy and supremacy of the political is not a modern presumption, or at any rate not one that has survived the onward march of modernity. Precisely because it flouted the subsequent tendencies toward sociological reductionism on the one hand and the political eschatology of the Dialectic or of Being on the other, the distinctively American perspective on politics was bound to come to appear passé. And, America itself being the land of progress, a progressively radical modernity was bound to take its toll on American self-understanding as it has on liberalism elsewhere in the West. "*La Cina è vicina*", chanted Italian student radicals enamored of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution: "China is near." Fortunately for Italy, it wasn't, but even Ceaser would agree that for most Americans today Madison and Hamilton are far away. And "most Americans" here emphatically includes the intellectuals.

It thus appears that Ceaser's book is above all a critique of contemporary American culture for its manifest indifference to the "real America." It is a paradox, to say the least, that however hard we look, the so-called "real America" is hardly to be found in America today outside the pages of Ceaser's book.

Ceaser, following the Founders, takes his stand on common sense or our prescientific experience of the world, which reveals it to be composed of spheres that differ from each other qualitatively and to which therefore qualitatively different arts and sciences apply. Political science must therefore be political in its approach, differing fundamentally from natural science: it cannot consist of the application to political life of models drawn from the latter. It must depend on political judgment. Modern science, on the other hand, rejects both the authority of common sense and its experience of the world as heterogeneous. If the world is as modern science presents it—if it is to be such that science can comprehend it—then politics must be reducible to the subpolitical. Political science must rely on psychology, sociology (including sociobiology) or economics. If, alternatively, the world is as Kojève or the later Heidegger presents it, then the possibility of a significant politics fades before our global destiny: what matters is only the suprapolitical.

Ceaser offers a political critique of the various modern understandings of the world that have issued in symbolic Americas. He appeals to an indignation, a concern with maintaining human pride, which is itself political. Yet in a sense this begs the ultimate question, which is just that of the status of the political. To establish the autonomy of both politics and political science today would be to fill a tall order indeed. Is Ceaser bluffing? One thing you can bet on is that the partisans of postmodernity won't fold. □

Clifford Orwin, professor of political science at the University of Toronto, works hard at being both Canadian and American.

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The Road to Damascus . . .

Fouad Ajami

Itamar Rabinovich, *The Brink of Peace: The Syrian-Israeli Negotiations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 283 pp., $24.95.

WE CAN ONLY MARVEL today at the extravagant hopes that attended Syrian-Israeli diplomacy in the interlude between 1993 and 1996, and at the American expectation that a deal was imminent between these two antagonists. It was what the Clinton administration wanted and yearned for. There may have been no great American investment in the endeavor, but a conviction had seized American officials that a Pax Americana that would marginalize Iran was within reach, and that such a design required a Syrian-Israeli accord. Indeed, as the scholar and diplomat Itamar Rabinovich, who conducted Israel's negotiations, tells us in his masterful chronicle of this period, a time had been set aside on Bill Clinton's schedule for a possible meeting with Hafez al-Asad and Yitzhak Rabin in November of 1995.

No such meeting, of course, took place, and it was not just the assassination of the legendary Israeli leader early that month that had brought these hopes crashing down. There had been other troubles along the way, and the thing itself was always a hope against hope that the stalemate would be broken, that Syria's concept of peace and Israel's stake in the Golan Heights could be brought together by agile diplomacy. There was, to begin with, the style of the Syrian strongman, and his method of diplomacy: as Rabinovich writes, Asad had acted over three and a half years "as if time were no constraint." He had brought himself, as it were, to the brink of peace. He had talked of a "peace of the brave", but that peace slogan was "cryptical, cold and enigmatic. Israel was not mentioned by name, and was told that it could enjoy peace with Syria on the latter's terms." The hesitation of the man in Damascus had only fed the caution of Rabin; the Israeli leader would not leap into the void. "Cerebral, direct, and blunt", Rabin could only countenance a reciprocal peace. In Rabinovich's summation, for Rabin the depth of territorial withdrawal on the Golan Heights would reflect the depth of peace.

The Syrian ruler had been too slow and methodical for his own good. Other options soon overtook the possibility of a Syrian-Israeli accord. There was a stealth peace in the making between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, which bore swift results in September 1993. And there was an easier peace between Jerusalem and Amman which was concluded in the summer of 1994 and formally signed in October. Asad had drowned the diplomacy in the details; he had never assimilated the facts of Israel's political system; the circuits had grown overloaded and a Rabin government ruling with a slim majority could not give him the full territorial withdrawal he demanded in return for that "enigmatic" peace.

Nor could Shimon Peres, Rabin's successor, give Asad what he sought. True, Peres had extended an olive branch to Asad, had offered, as Peres put it, "to fly high and fast or low and slow" to accommodate his Syrian counterpart. But whatever promise lay in those negotiations soon fell to the wave of terror that hit Israel in February-March of 1996, and to a bitter proxy Syrian-Israeli confrontation over the Israeli-Lebanese borders shortly thereafter. By the time Peres had been defeated at the polls by Benyamin Netanyahu in May of 1996, the Israeli-Syrian negotiations of 1992-96 had

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come to an end. The prospect of peace between Israel and Syria had held the Americans in thrall, and it had tantalized the protagonists, but the differences could not be wished away; time overtook the diplomatic work.

IT IS DIPLOMATIC history's luck and good fortune that Itamar Rabinovich was there for that critical interlude. Not since Henry Kissinger's intricate record of his negotiations with Syria and Israel in the aftermath of the October War of 1973 has anyone written of Syrian-Israeli matters with such artistry and precision and knowledge. Everything in Rabinovich's life came together, it seemed, to bring him to those negotiations, and he has honored these gifts with an unforgettable work of diplomatic history. Chance and the exigencies of war had taken him, as a young captain in the Israeli army, to the local headquarters of the Ba'ath Party, in the town of Quneitra on the Golan Heights in June of 1967. There he had found the documents and memoranda of the party, and those documents were to provide the material for his Ph.D. dissertation and for his first book. Over the intervening quarter century—until his patron, friend and neighbor, Yitzhak Rabin, named him as negotiator with Syria and ambassador to Washington—Syria had been his calling and vocation.

That country, so near and yet so far, had tugged at Rabinovich, and had been one of the centerpieces of a distinguished academic career at Tel Aviv University. He knew and understood Syria's history and its currents as precious few people anywhere did. He had the historian's best fidelities: he bore Syria no animus, he entertained no great illusions about an imminent transformation in Syria's politics; he had the historian's fascination with his subject and attentiveness to its details. It must have been the fulfillment of a dream when the assignment was given him by Rabin. Here is my favorite scene, from a book loaded with poignant scenes and happenings. On a Saturday morning, Rabinovich was summoned by his neighbor Rabin. "The prime minister was typically careful. As a hedge against a negative answer he asked me to recommend a suitable academic expert on Syria with public standing to become the new head of the Israeli delegation to the peace talks with Syria. . . . I was naturally reluctant to recommend myself, but we soon found our way around the problem." A book with this kind of stark candor is a delight to behold and never loses its way.

In his work as an historian, Rabinovich had written a prior work of great relevance to this new pursuit, *The Road Not Taken: Early Arab-Israeli Negotiations* (1991). The most arresting part of that book concerned a Syrian adventurer, a colonel by the name of Husni Zaim, who had seized power in March of 1949 and had talked bravely, through American handlers and secret channels, of a great accommodation with Israel. A product of France's colonial levy in the Levant and aloof from the currents of Syrian nationalism, erratic and possessed of fantasies that he was something of a Syrian Atatürk, Zaim was given to grandiose talk about a joint Israeli-Syrian army that would dominate the region. But the adventurer was struck down a bare four months into his rule. Rabinovich had given his Syrian interlocutors a copy of that book. "Right policy, wrong man", the Syrians had said of Zaim. Gone were the days of wild swings in Syrian diplomacy; in Asad excessive caution would now have its day. But caution, too, could fail, we were soon to learn.

THOUGH understated in its tone, Rabinovich's book has a bold thesis of its own: Asad had made the decision for peace, but his particular definition of peace, his personal history, his fear of what peace might do to the closed polity he had come to build over a quarter century—all these would not enable him to make that breakthrough. He was a "meticulous tactician", but a new relationship with Israel that would return the Golan Heights to Syrian sovereignty required more than that. Asad had before him the example of Anwar Sadat—the daring passage

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to Israel in November of 1977, the direct appeal to Israel's people, the relationship he built with its leaders, the land he recovered. But Asad had nothing but contempt for Sadat and his legacy and his example. On Rabinovich's telling, the mere mention of Sadat's name to his Syrian interlocutors was sure to provoke their fury. The Syrians wanted the wages of peace, but the public diplomacy that Israel's political culture required was anathema to them and to their ruler.

Asad's caution brought him the very outcome he dreaded: Yasser Arafat and King Hussein would steal a march on him, in precisely the same manner that Sadat had done a generation earlier. The deal Arafat struck in 1993 must have been particularly bitter to Asad. He had been upstaged, Rabinovich writes, by "a man he despised and disliked." Worse still, that breakthrough with the PLO had not been Rabin's first choice. It was the Syrian peace that had the greater appeal to Rabin. For all its faults, Syria was a stable polity, and its centralized rule, he thought, could deliver a meaningful accommodation that was beyond the reach and the means of Arafat and his lieutenants. The green light Rabin gave to Shimon Peres to bring the Oslo negotiations to fruition was given only after the Syrian option had stalled in late 1993. Rabin had envisaged a good measure of normalization in return for phased withdrawal from the Golan over a five-year period. He needed the Syrian ruler's help to bring his polity along, to reconcile it to the territorial concessions, but this was not to be. Instead, peace with the Palestinians became "the cutting edge" of Arab-Israeli peace. Thus the Israeli leader ended up making the bold decision of his all too brief career as prime minister "in the Palestinian and not in the Syrian context."

Where Rabin's deliberateness had once taxed the Syrians, they now would have a new alibi: the very "boldness" of Shimon Peres, the audacity of his concept of a "New Middle East" transformed by commerce and the free flow of ideas into a utopian world, a vision of the Benelux in the lands of the Levant. The will to fly "high and fast" exhibited by Peres was not to Syria's liking; nor was Peres' new, liberal utopia the sort of vision to captivate them. Peres was more ambitious, hence more troubling, than Rabin. And then the electoral calendar of Peres imposed its own discipline and limitations on the process. Peres had a choice to make: early elections in the Spring of 1996 or in late October. He went for early elections, in part because he could not secure from Asad an outcome that could serve as the cornerstone of his campaign. That decision wrote the rest of the story, for no great concessions could be granted the Syrians in the midst of a fierce, close election.

Asad took Peres' decision as a deed of betrayal. He was now free to set the Lebanese-Israeli border ablaze, through Hizballah operatives. Peres' response, Operation Grapes of Wrath, a mere few weeks before the elections, boomeranged on him. It ended in failure and tragedy when Israeli artillery hit a group of civilians in southern Lebanon, in the village of Kafar Qana, and took a toll of more than one hundred lives. In the Syrian narrative of late, a breakthrough had been aborted by Netanyahu's victory. But in truth, as we know from this tight account, the process had independently arrived at its own moment of truth.

A day may yet come when a peace without illusions will materialize between Syria and Israel. This possibility is held out in Rabinovich's final pages. If it should come, it would most likely approximate Yitzhak Rabin's stark, unadorned vision: a soldier's peace, one without frills and trumpets. In other words, the sort of peace that Rabinovich labored for and has retrieved and chronicled for us—and for the negotiations yet to come—in this knowing and moving book. In the interim, this uneasy accommodation on the Syrian-Israeli border is the best that could be hoped for. □

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. . . And the Road to Vienna

Noel Malcolm

Paul Lendvai, *Blacklisted: A Journalist's Life in Central Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 213 pp., $39.50.

PAUL LENDVAI is one of the Grand Old Men of European journalism. Having fled to Vienna in early 1957, just months after the Soviet suppression of the rising in his native Hungary, he quickly made a name for himself as a sharp-eyed commentator on East European affairs. For twenty-two years he worked for the *Financial Times*; then he became head of the Eastern Europe desk of Austrian television and radio (in 1982), and five years later director of Radio Austria International. By this stage he was almost an institution in himself, having become the sort of journalist who may spend as much time answering questions from political leaders (requests for advice, analysis, and so forth) as he does asking them questions of his own.

His range was impressive; few other commentators had either the energy or the linguistic skills to keep track of political developments in Hungary, Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union and all the Balkan states. And despite a heavy workload of daily journalism, he also found time to write several substantial works of synthesis. The book he is probably best known for is *Eagles in Cobwebs* (1969), a highly readable panoramic survey of communist rule in the Balkans. In some ways, naturally enough, this work has now been superseded, both by later books and by events; and on a few points Lendvai's judgment does seem in retrospect naively optimistic. (He hugely overestimated the significance of the "independent" attitude taken by Romania's Nikolai Ceausescu toward his Soviet godfathers; yet, to be fair, this was a common illusion at the time, shared even by hard-headed Romanian émigrés such as Ghita Ionescu.) But Lendvai's central theme in this book was the interplay between communism and nationalism, and the ways in which the latter could either subvert the former or be manipulated by it. By concentrating on this issue, he proved himself a shrewder judge of Balkan realities than all the academic social scientists of the day, whose treatises on party structures and economic "self-management" are now gathering dust on shelves.

Two of his other books remain indispensable. *Anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe* (1971) was a comparative study of the relationship between Jews and communism in four countries. Focusing especially on the extraordinary campaigns of official anti-Semitism that were launched in Poland and Czechoslovakia in the late 1960s, it remains one of the best case studies of the fomenting and instrumentalizing of so-called ethnic hatreds from above. And *The Bureaucracy of Truth* (1980) has never been bettered as a wide-ranging, marvelously factual study of how communist regimes controlled and manipulated the flow of news and information.

Readers of both those books will have sensed from time to time, behind the cool, analytic prose, a quickening of personal feelings and a burden of personal experience. Twentieth-century anti-Semitism was of more than theoretical interest to Paul Lendvai, many of whose relatives were murdered at Auschwitz. And the techniques of communist news-management were something he had had to study assiduously in the first phase of his career, as a young journalist in the Budapest of the 1950s. Now, in his seventieth year, he has produced a brief but fascinating autobiography, in which these and other experiences are

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treated with a mixture of bemused detachment and still smoldering anger.

AS IS SO often the case with autobiographies, the earliest parts are the best. He recalls step-by-step degradation of the Hungarian Jews from 1941 onwards, and the humiliation of his father, a decorated officer from the First World War, who was stripped of his rank and sent to do "labor service" wearing a yellow armband. (Some of the father's understandable nostalgia for the old Austro-Hungarian Empire has rubbed off on the son: Lendvai not only sings the praises of late nineteenth-century Hungary's treatment of its Jews, but also calls the Empire a "multinational state built on political equality and minority rights"—a description that would find few takers in Zagreb or Bucharest.)

Lendvai slipped through the net of the Nazi roundup of Hungarian Jews in the spring and summer of 1944, though he was later arrested by Hungarian fascists and sent on one of the infamous "death marches", from which he managed to escape. His parents too survived, having learned some of the necessary techniques of evasion and self-effacement; similar techniques and attitudes would be needed a few years later to cope with life in a communist police state. But just as Lendvai's father, the decorated ex-officer, had found it difficult to believe that the state he had loyally served could intend him any harm, so the young Paul Lendvai would take a long time to lose his illusions about a beneficent "people's government."

For young Paul was, or became, a leftist himself—in some ways perhaps a more committed leftist than many of the communists that now came to power, for whom power itself, and the aggrandizement of their Soviet sponsor, were the only real considerations. Lendvai describes (with the help of recently released documents) the ruthless tactics with which the communists took control of the political system in 1946-48; and yet, while this was happening, he himself was actively campaigning within the "youth groups" of the traditional left-wing party, the Social Democrats (SD), for a more pro-communist policy. On one occasion, he recalls, he even demanded the resignation of a leading SD intellectual who was against close involvement with the communists. These pages of his autobiography must have been painful to write; they are suffused with shame and sorrow.

The "merger" of the SDs with the communists (i.e., the complete takeover of the former by the latter) was followed swiftly enough by the arrest of key SD politicians; the staged trials of these non-communists then provided the model for the first of the great communist show-trials, the indictment of Foreign Minister Laszlo Rajk in 1949. Lendvai, meanwhile, was learning the ropes of Soviet-style journalism in the central Hungarian News Agency. Much of what he was taught involved the manipulation or deception of the public; once, for example, he was seriously reprimanded for mentioning, in a triumphalistic article about a slump in the U.S. car industry, that two million fewer cars had been produced that year. "By mentioning the absolute figures", his boss told him, "you make it possible to get an idea of how many vehicles come off the assembly line. It would have sufficed to mention only the percentage."

And yet, although the young Lendvai registered such things in his mind and clearly understood the cynical way in which this news system operated, he continued to believe in the aims it served. Thus he took part enthusiastically in its campaigns against such ideological bogeys as "Titoist revisionism", or even (though he now blushes to admit this) "international Zionism." In both psychological and political terms, this section of the book is the most fascinating of all, offering as it does a specimen of a peculiar—but, in communist regimes, characteristic—condition. What is one to call it? Cognitive dissonance? The willing suspension of disbelief? Perhaps a combination of "the captive mind", in Milosz's phrase, and the split personality—with, in this case, a touch of that tragically misdirected "idealism" familiar to us from Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*.

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LENDVAI'S OWN arrest and imprisonment, one foggy evening in January 1953, follows with grim predictability. Although he had supported the merger of the SDs with the communists, he was tainted both by the mere fact that he had come from a rival party, and by his association with a leading SD intellectual who had already "confessed" in a show-trial. Eventually released, after signing the necessary self-incrimination, Lendvai slowly rebuilt his career as a writer and journalist. And yet even now he had not lost all faith in the system: he campaigned doggedly for a reconsideration of his case, convinced that the authorities would treat him fairly in the end. At the time of the political crisis in 1956 he belonged, as he says, to those socialist intellectuals who thought Nagy would reform communism and restore its ideals, not to the workers in the streets who tore down the red stars and called for a return to pre-communist democracy.

So when Lendvai took his one-way trip to Vienna in February 1957, he was not a typical refugee from the Soviet crackdown. He had continued to work as a journalist, and had got out (to Warsaw and Prague, initially) on an official press visa. It was, he says, his discussions with Western journalists in Poland and Czechoslovakia that opened his eyes to the real nature of the intellectual freedom of the West. This crucial turning point in his mental life is treated rather summarily; one senses that the full range of psychological factors involved has not been opened to inspection.

Readers may also sense an implicit feeling of guilt: when so many others had lost their lives, or fled in fear of imprisonment or execution for their actions in 1956, here was a reasonably successful young man with no pressing reason to flee, and whose own earlier persecution by the regime had been, he continued to believe, some sort of mistake. Perhaps the energy with which Lendvai now threw himself into becoming a Western-style "objective" political journalist was the expression, partly, of a compensation syndrome. Having hitherto compromised the truth, in his thinking and his life, he was determined to make up for it by becoming a tireless researcher into the realities of communism. If that was the psychological debt that weighed on him, then it should be said that the forty years of work that followed have more than repaid it.

The later chapters of the book describe his subsequent career; but though the work he did was important, it makes for less interesting autobiography. He was a commentator and analyst rather than a reporter: this is not, therefore, one of those foreign correspondent's memoirs that are full of dramatic incidents in far-flung places. Even the "blacklisting" that he suffered from several communist regimes in the 1980s, although apparently thought dramatic enough to give the book its title, does not seem very remarkable in itself. What makes this account of it interesting is the fact that Lendvai is now able to quote the relevant files and telegrams from Communist Party archives, with their gloriously florid mixture of bureaucratese, misinformation and sheer invention.

Other details from recently released documents cast odd shafts of light into other corners of Lendvai's earlier life. A person of his age who lived in a communist state can now read about himself in a way (and, sometimes, to a degree of detail) that he would never have thought possible—almost as if it were God, not the secret police, whose dossiers were now available for consultation. The extraordinary changes that have taken place since 1989 impinge in another way too: from time to time Lendvai comments on the success of Hungarian communist hacks in transforming themselves into respected "post-communist" intellectuals. One would almost like Lendvai to have been more unforgiving here, dishing out the dirt more explicitly and removing the veils of anonymity from several of his subjects. But perhaps, in the end, he decided that that was God's role, not his. For his main aim in writing this book was not to accuse the consciences of others, but to examine his own; in doing so, he has written a very personal document that can still tell us some important things about the human history of this century. □

Noel Malcolm is author of *Kosovo: A Short History* (New York University Press, 1998).

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Letters

The Ties That Fray:

STEPHEN Walt ["The Ties That Fray: Why Europe and America are Drifting Apart", Winter 1998/99] writes with characteristic insight and clarity about the sources of friction in transatlantic relations. However, neither the recommendation that "it is time for Europe and the United States to begin a slow and gradual process of disengagement" nor the implication that this course is driven by "the tides of history" necessarily follows. Instead, the likelihood that the transatlantic partnership holds together or even expands may be more realistic.

Walt identifies three fundamental unifying forces as gone or eroding: the Soviet threat, America's economic stake in Europe, and the generation of elites with shared experience which left them committed to the Atlantic community. But each factor can be understood in very different ways. First, while the end of the Soviet threat and the Cold War does impact profoundly, and not just on Atlantic relations, NATO remains a hedge against the highly uncertain future of Russia and the former Soviet Union, as well as perils in the southern Mediterranean and Middle East. Second, the United States and Europe retain a deep mutual interest in the stability of the international economy and thus are virtually compelled to maintain close institutional collaboration on a wide range of issues. Third, members of the successor generation have come to maturity in an environment where they are comfortably at home not only with their neighbors but with the United States, speak English, and take for granted a pervasive web of relationships in economic, political and cultural life. Laments about American media and mass culture are nothing new, and they are hardy perennials on this side of the Atlantic as well.

Walt rightly cites conflicts over Bosnia, UNSCOM, Middle East peace, Cuba, American unilateralism and other issues, but even at the height of the Cold War disputes among the Atlantic countries were common (German rearmament, Suez, détente, the 1973 Yom Kippur War and the oil shocks, as well as American absorption with non-European matters in Korea, China, Cuba, Vietnam and the Middle East).

Ultimately, the disappearance of a hegemonic threat in Europe has had a profound impact, though probably greater on America than on Europe. Nonetheless, there are good reasons not to conclude that this will produce European-American disengagement, and even less reason to take steps to begin that process.

Robert J. Lieber
Georgetown University

PROFESSOR Stephen Walt may be correct in his assertion that America and Europe are drifting apart. On the other hand, it may be too soon to reach so clear a conclusion.

Real world relationships and outcomes are not foreordained by "structural forces." They are revealed and re-directed through the active commitment of leaders and citizenry. It thus is possible to remain agnostic over the fate of the Atlantic community—whether it shall give way to a Pacific community, metastasize into a broader union or simply die—and still be convinced that America and Europe have reason to work together.

Before rushing to settle one's prediction it might be useful first to revisit the underpinnings of the Atlantic idea, or what has come to be called *Atlanticism*, and to judge whether it too has atrophied to the point of obsolescence. The idea took shape in the coming together over shared goals and principles during the Second World War and

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evolved into an overarching mission, which joined the American commitment to the freedom and prosperity of Europe with a duty to counter the Soviet threat worldwide. These elements all survive except the last. But just as there were reservations throughout the Cold War over the predominance of a common threat in maintaining transatlantic cohesion, the subsequent removal of the threat should not be overestimated.

Clearly, this is not the first time Americans and Europeans have questioned the alliance's viability only to be confronted with even more compelling and diverse arguments for its perseverance. Nor are those challenges so unquestionably the culmination of natural ambitions that were stifled during the Cold War. The claim that the alliance's responsible proponents took "it for granted" is simply incorrect. And one doubts that de Gaulle, Brandt and like innovators would correspondingly degrade their own alternatives by asserting that they carry the weight of urgency only now in the post-Soviet wake.

Against a view of inevitable competition, the potential for renewed importance of Atlanticism can be seen in the possible emergence—today only dimly realized—of a strong economic Europe that could play a growing political role, as a partner or a rival or both, to the United States. A new generation of Atlanticists might see more benefits than liabilities in seeking common cause to promote one another's interests. Atlanticism thus understood is an approach to the world and an outlook on it. It signifies an important maturation of international relations, so long as we and our European colleagues do not bury it once and for all.

What Atlanticism offers should transcend the geographic limits of its name and the biological clock of the exceptional leaders who delivered it. Whether their children, understudies or other entitled members of the "transatlantic cadre" are up to the challenge is another question. Proud commemorations aside, the costs of an approach marked by a greater degree of humility would be far outweighed by success in the preservation of Atlanticism's tremendous worth.

Kenneth Weisbrode
The Atlantic Council of the United States

IN "The Ties That Fray", Stephen Walt likens NATO to Dorian Gray, ostensibly in the pink while all the time growing more and more infirm. His analysis leads to the conclusion, which he himself confesses is "no reason to rejoice", that the United States and Europe might as well take a good look at the picture in their attic, confront the inevitable, and begin to disentangle themselves from each other's affairs.

While his conclusion is hardly original (though it may, if we are imprudent, be borne out by events), what *is* unique in this article is the manner in which its author appears so willing to abandon his own intellectual progeny, "balance-of-threat" theory. One would have thought that a realist who takes seriously this theory's implications would understand that there is nothing axiomatic about Europe emerging as a challenger to American power.

Provided that Washington continues to wish to be *primus inter pares* in the transatlantic world, and that it understands when and how to share in the design and management of the West's security agenda, there is no reason why NATO cannot continue to entangle countries on either side of the Atlantic for some good time to come.

But if NATO manages, in the medium-term future, to lapse into irrelevance, it will have little to do either with the absence of its Soviet adversary or the presence of monetary union among some of its members (in Canada we have a hard time believing that a single currency guarantees political unity). It will have everything to do with "generational change", and in particular the preferences of policy elites who, as always, will do so much to shape the public debate.

There is no sign that in Western Europe such elites are growing fatigued with the alliance; quite the contrary, especially if one judges from Walt's favorite example of generational change, namely, the current crop of German leaders, who seem to be far better Atlanticists today than they were two decades ago.

Instead, the pressure for dissolution would come from the United States, leading to two questions: Why should America wish to demolish a status quo that so demonstrably works in its interests? And why should some realists keep insisting that

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NATO's years are numbered, for is it not the principal task of realists, as the editor of this journal reminded us not so long ago, to "try to see things as they really are"?

David G. Haglund
Queen's University, Canada

Walt replies:

ROBERT Lieber, Kenneth Weisbrode and David Haglund admit that the glue holding NATO together has weakened, but each believes that the alliance can and should persist. Together they offer four familiar but unconvincing arguments for maintaining the status quo.

First, NATO is seen as a valuable hedge against a resurgent Russia. This rationale made some sense before the full extent of Russia's collapse was apparent, but it makes little sense today. Germany's GDP alone is now larger than Russia's and Russian military power is in free-fall. Russia is not coming back anytime soon; if by some miracle it does, the Europeans can take care of it by themselves.

Second, NATO is said to be a useful asset for dealing with instability in places like the Middle East or the southern Mediterranean. This claim assumes that vital U.S. interests are in jeopardy in these regions and that NATO is a valuable tool for protecting them. But where exactly is the threat? Israel is the dominant military power in the Middle East, the price of oil is at a thirty-year low, and Iraq has been pummeled into impotence. More importantly, NATO is not much of an asset in these areas. The Europeans do not share the American commitment to Israel, Great Britain is the only NATO ally that has consistently backed U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf, and NATO's European members oppose U.S. plans for a global campaign against weapons of mass destruction. Outside of Europe, in fact, the United States might find NATO to be more of a hindrance than a help.

Third, Lieber argues that the United States and Europe share a common interest in a healthy world economy and thus are "virtually compelled to maintain close institutional collaboration on a wide range of issues." He is correct, but the issue is not whether the United States and Europe will continue to cooperate economically, but whether Europeans and Americans will be willing to fight and die for each other and whether they should base their foreign policies on that presumption. Our ability to trade and invest does not require the permanent garrisoning of Europe by U.S. troops.

Fourth, all three writers suggest that Europe and America are united by a web of economic, political and cultural forces, and that the "shared goals and principles" of Atlanticism can transcend the generational changes that lie ahead. This view overstates both the past role of these ideals and their likely impact in the future. The United States did not want to remain in Europe after World War II, and even staunch Atlanticists like Dwight D. Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles sought to bring U.S. forces home throughout the 1950s. What kept the United States in Europe was not some fuzzy notion of Atlanticism; it was the looming military power of the Soviet Union. If the "Atlantic ideal" is the glue upon which NATO now depends, it is in even worse shape than I thought.

Finally, to argue that the status quo is still viable means assuming that the United States will underwrite Europe's security indefinitely and that Europe will be content to remain America's junior partner. Both assumptions are unlikely. Germany's current leaders may be less anti-American now than they were in their youth, but they are also less deferential and pro-American than were their predecessors. In the next century, Europe's leaders will pay less and less attention to Washington's whims and concentrate on advancing their own interests. Over time, Europe's greater independence will make Americans even less inclined to subsidize Europe's security.

As for the United States, it has thus far avoided hard strategic choices because its economy is booming and its far-flung military activities have cost few American lives. As long as being *primus inter pares* is easy and cheap, U.S. elites will be tempted to run the world and U.S. citizens will be willing to let them try. The real question is how the United States will respond when its economy begins to sputter or its military commitments require real sacrifices. When one of these happens, Americans will quickly ask why

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they are still protecting a set of wealthy states who are fully capable of defending themselves.

The Rise of English Nationalism:

PLEASE, spare us. Robin Harris' essay on the Balkanization of Britain ["The Rise of English Nationalism and the Balkanization of Britain", Winter 1998/99] was such a farrago of nonsense from start to finish that it degraded your usual collection of fascinating pieces. That the British state is evolving into something different from that in which Harris grew up is indisputable; but then, the states of the British Isles have always evolved (as have states everywhere else). There is no immutable "Britain" or "Britishness" which, by dint of repetition of its wonders, must ever, ever, endure. The United Kingdom has existed within its present borders only since 1921. The version that existed before that was born only in 1801; that is to say, a generation after the American Declaration of Independence. By comparison with the United States, indeed, you could argue that "Britain" is a rather young country. The United States has (with a few amendments) been governed by the same constitutive rules for more than two hundred years. Britain, by contrast, changes its constitutive rules at the whim of whomever happens to hold a temporary majority in the House of Commons—so in the 1970s, for example, the Conservative Party made English law (and Scottish law, which is different) subject to that of the European Union, and in the 1980s emasculated the ancient privileges of local government; in the 1990s, the Labour Party made the terms of the European Convention on Human Rights a part of English and Scottish law. In Britain, such constitutional adaptations are commonplace, and have been for generations. So far, the stars have not stopped in their appointed round.

Circumstances change, for states as well as people. Britain used to have a political empire, which employed thousands of Britons overseas. Now, those who come from the British Isles are no less prepared to live and work abroad (the British diaspora is huge) but do so to purely commercial ends. Meanwhile, the Empire has come home (as it was always bound to) in the shape of Britons with ethnic roots in the Indian subcontinent and the Caribbean. This has created an extra layer of ethnic diversity in a society that has, for generations, been more or less happily ethnically mixed. Perhaps most importantly, the states of continental Europe—twenty miles away from Britain—have, for their own reasons, decided to move toward near-federation. That federation is (a) something which Britain cannot conceivably ignore or attempt to stop; and (b) something that many of those who live in the British Isles—English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish—would rather like to belong to. All of this changes the nature of the state and the nature of citizens' allegiance to it; none of it presupposes collapse, crisis, an end to alliances, terminal decline or any other horrid outcome. Relax.

Oh, another thing. Members of the British chattering class love to use football, and football fans, to make larger political points. This is a futile exercise; please do not allow it to sully the pages of *The National Interest* again.

Michael Elliott
Editor, Newsweek International

THE ODD feature of Robin Harris' article on English nationalism is that he entirely ignores the most important change in British society in the past half century. The population is now much more varied than the English, Scots, Welsh and Irish to whom he limits his comments. The U.K. has several million citizens of, in particular, Caribbean and South Asian origin, mainly in England, and making a major contribution to its economic, social and cultural life.

The term "British" is a legal concept which applied historically to a significant proportion of the world's population. It is still possible to be a Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Jain and also British, as it was under the Raj—but living in Birmingham, not Bombay.

The question is: can one be black, brown or yellow, Muslim or Hindu, and *English*? Can a revived English nationalism (*pace* the football hooligans) be a cultural-cum-geographical rather than an ethnic concept, and embrace (without waiting for centuries of intermarriage) immigrants

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and their descendants who are visibly different from the natives? Danes, Normans, Flemings, Huguenots, Dutch and German monarchical carpet-baggers, free 1939-45 Poles, Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews, as well as some thousands of freed eighteenth-century African slaves (and of course Scots, Welsh and Irish) have been absorbed into England's already mixed gene pool, or at least integrated into its society—witness Barbirolli, Holst, Epstein, Courtauld, Elizabeth II, amongst others.

All nationalisms are constructs, mostly initially by force, followed by political, linguistic and cultural indoctrination. Deconstructing British nationalism after three centuries may appear easy; those who consciously seek to reconstruct English nationalism should take care.

Incidentally, it is not only the electoral process that separates Conservative politicians from Conservative newspaper editors; most of the latter are paid by North Americans whose interest in Britain is primarily commercial.

Roger Broad
London

Russia's Crisis, America's Complicity:

DIMITRI Simes' analysis of the current Russian situation ["Russia's Crisis, America's Complicity", Winter 1998/99] is shrewd, pertinent and lucid. His main mistakes, which he shares with most Russian analysts abroad, are the following:

There have been no "reformers" in power in Russia for the past seven years—only robbers, embezzlers and crooks. The very term "course of reform" mocks common sense when set next to what these "reformers" have done. The Herculean task of transforming a command economy into a market one surely presupposed some upheavals in the social life of the country, but not the non-stop plundering of the population that has resulted in the pauperization of almost three-quarters of the Russian people.

What so-called reformers have done so far is to divide the bulk of nominal state property among themselves and their cronies. The virtual commercial banks created by the Russian "oligarchs", pardon the expression, collapsed this past autumn because their funds, mostly customer deposits, had been transferred abroad and turned into their personal property.

As for democracy in Russia, Simes is too kind, for there is nothing of the sort. Soviet power persists in Russia under a different guise, with the president and his administration playing the role of the former Soviet Politburo.

Another mistake is to differentiate between "bad" former communists and "good" present democrats. The main "democrat" in the country is actually a czar, as Simes rightly calls him. All the persons in the ruling clique are either former communists (like Chernomyrdin, Gaidar, Primakov) or former members of the Young Communist League (Nemtsov, Kiriyenko). That dirty label, "former communist", which is widely applied to their opponents by some political gangsters temporarily removed from cutting the sweet cake, is used to trick a confused electorate as to their own alleged "integrity and honesty."

The clinging of Mr. Clinton to Yeltsin, as Simes correctly underscores, is generated by the latter's pliant behavior. Russia's public strongly resents Yeltsin's groveling before Washington, and, as Simes suggests, that resentment will evoke a price, to be paid, no doubt, by both countries in the future.

Henry Trofimenko
Moscow

Simes replies:

EVEN the most casual reading of my article demonstrates that I have no illusions about Russian efforts at reform and do not take the claims of Russia's so-called "democrats" at face value. The need to see through their encouraging but frequently misleading rhetoric is central to the piece and is presented in fairly graphic terms. What seems to bother Professor Trofimenko, however, is that while I express skepticism about the self-styled "democrats" and their commitment to genuine market reform, I am not prepared to reduce all of them to nothing but "robbers, embezzlers and crooks." Surely some constructive developments did occur in the country during

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their rule; for example, the level of pluralism and the development of civil society in today's Russia are historically unprecedented. Trofimenko fails to acknowledge the existence of these contradictory trends and insists on seeing black and white in a complex transformation that has produced many shades of gray.

Can Japan Come Back?

PETER Hartcher's "Can Japan Come Back?" [Winter 1998/99] states, "when the United States went on its 1980s debt binge, Japan systematically financed the U.S. federal deficit to help prevent an explosion in American interest rates."

This flawed throw-away line is unfortunate in an otherwise thoughtful analysis. The so-called "debt binge" was an investment: tax cuts plus increased spending yields economic growth in a free-market economy. And Japan bought U.S. debt not to prop up our economy but because it was the best economic use of its surplus: a sound investment by a nation whose own economy, crony-capitalistic in character, was not an attractive enough place to plough the money.

The proof of this is the current state of the two nations' economic health.

Sidney Helfant
Kingsborough Community College, New York

Uncomfortable, But Invaluable:

I AM an admirer of Peter Coleman's *Liberal Conspiracy*, a chronicle of the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF), a distinguished CIA-funded undertaking parallel to Radio Free Europe (RFE) and also, in its way, remarkably effective. If he had informed himself to even a limited degree on RFE's history, as he did on the CCF, he could have written an incisive review of George Urban's book, which calls for a great deal more questioning and correction than he gave it. His review of *Radio Free Europe and the Pursuit of Democracy: My War Within the Cold War* ["Uncomfortable, But Invaluable", Winter 1998/99] is deficient and compounds the shortcomings of the book itself, which is more a personal memoir—with all the self-justification, self-dramatization, and settling of old scores which that genre can entail—than a real history of RFE.

Urban's book and Coleman's uncritical praise of it are unjust to the hundreds of men and women—Americans, exiles from Eastern Europe, and West Europeans—who worked during the 1960s and 1970s to make RFE the most successful anti-Soviet operation the West undertook in the past half century. Launched in 1950, the broadcasting principles and techniques that ensured RFE's success had been tested and firmly established by 1953 and never changed. I am in a position to know. I joined RFE in the fall of 1952 as deputy political adviser and remained there for six years. (Most of the other "founders" from the early 1950s are now dead. The most illustrious, Bill Griffith, died only two months ago. Foremost among those living is Jan Nowak, for twenty-five years head of the Voice of Free Poland and author of *Wojna w Eterze*, a splendid account which has yet to be translated into English.)

I leave comment on the later years to those who served RFE then and confine my remarks to Coleman's distorted characterization of the radio's beginnings, which seem to be based more on his own imagination than on what Urban wrote. Coleman declares:

> Launched in 1951, it took a few years to strike form. Beginning as a CIA 'black radio' whose mission included disinformation and counter-revolution, the turning point was the Hungarian bloodbath in 1956.

Not so. Radio Free Europe began broadcasting on July 4, 1950 from the United States. The Korean War speeded plans to broadcast from Europe. Funding was through CIA because no other government department could handle it so easily. The Voice of Free Czechoslovakia went on the air in May 1951. From the beginning it was a full home service station, broadcasting 12-15 hours per day and patterned after what a free Prague/Bratislava radio would have been had one been permitted to function. The identically con-

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ceived Voice of Free Hungary came into operation in October 1951 and the Voice of Free Poland on May 3, 1952.

There was never anything "black" about RFE broadcasts. They never spread disinformation or advocated violence. They concentrated on news, information and entertainment. All RFE services were partnerships between Americans and exiles. There was no pre-censorship of broadcasts. The station's policy meetings were open to journalists, academics and random visitors. Funds to operate the radio came through CIA; but the Agency did little else to or for RFE. The responsible organization as far as editorial policy was concerned was the Free Europe Committee in New York, made up of eminent retired public servants including Dwight Eisenhower, Lucius Clay, C.D. Jackson, Adolf Berle, Joseph Grew and many others.

Coleman's characterization cited above is his own invention. Despite the book's other shortcomings, Urban wrote accurately about the CIA connection with RFE and its sister service, Radio Liberty:

> The most remarkable overall feature of the two radios' association with the CIA before and after 1971 can be framed in the question: who influenced whom? It was, in my judgment, the two radios that left their imprint on Agency thinking rather than the Agency on the policies of the two radios, and that for perfectly natural and respectable reasons: the specialized personnel of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty had wider knowledge, were endowed with finer political instincts, were closer to the scene, and produced more penetrating analyses of all aspects of the communist world than members of the CIA .

Finally, the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 was neither caused by RFE nor a turning point in its evolution. Along with the Polish October of 1956, its ultimate effect on the Soviet Union was far greater than its impact on RFE.

Paul B. Henze
Bethesda, MD

PETER Coleman's review and unstinting praise of George Urban's book is unfortunate and misleading.

This is not to suggest that the entirety of the book is lacking in merit. On the contrary, a good deal of what Urban has to say is of considerable interest, well expressed and illustrative of the thought processes of a man with a deep sense of history, possessed of an analytical, often thoughtful and disciplined intellect. However, this book is presumably about RFE. The business of RFE is broadcasting. Regrettably, when Urban writes of his own role as RFE director during 1983-86 and of his assessment of the performance of RFE and those leading it during the era of détente, he descends to depths of exaggeration, distortion and falsification which cannot be ignored. Peter Coleman saw no reason to doubt the charges leveled by Urban. He should have.

Urban is troubled by such matters as the limitations of left-wing Western intellectuals and the pusillanimity he saw in the State Department. But he is obsessed by the alleged opposition he found in the radio's own ranks to some of his concepts and equally obsessed with the attempt to prove that the radios had become little more than a haven for appeasers (he uses the term "progressivists") during the period of détente.

The News Division comes in for particular expressions of scorn and contempt, as Urban argues that its staffers were not interested in defeating communism. Urban's real problem was that the leadership of the News Division was determined to uphold the essential traditions of objectivity and sound sourcing, which had been hallmarks of RFE news practices for uncounted years. Urban and Frank Shakespeare, chairman of the radios' federal oversight agency, the Board for International Broadcasting, sought to weaken those practices for opportunistic, shortsighted reasons. To their eternal credit, and at considerable risk to their own job safety, the executives managing the newsroom held their ground.

Were one to believe Urban, prior to his arrival the leadership of RFE had lost all will and desire to pursue the defeat of communism. Instead, its goal had become some kind of watered-down semi-socialist state. No form of impugnment is eschewed by the book's author in his attempt to prove this thesis. He writes of the

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radio's "agenda of accommodation", states that the more critically émigré broadcasting services dealt with communist policies "the more likely it was that English-speaking management would react by quietly intimating that there must after all be some good in those" communist policies. In a rare moment of self-criticism, Urban acknowledges that the radio's leadership had been much quicker to grasp the utility of the Helsinki Agreements, and particularly Basket Three, than had he. Even this, however, he turned against those who had preceded him, arguing that he "had reason to believe that some of them had embraced the Helsinki accords mainly because they allowed for an improving but still 'socialist' system." No proof was cited.

It is clear enough that Urban's real goal is to sully the broadcasting record of RFE during one era of the Cold War. His charges are of a very serious nature. Far from being mere exaggerations, they are absurd in every respect, as an examination of RFE and RL programs would reveal.

Urban rightly emphasizes the remarkable degree of autonomy enjoyed by the radios in spite of their funding by the U.S. government. Nonetheless, the radios lived in the real political world, however significant the degree of responsible independence they had. Urban strongly favored the setting up of an Albanian Broadcasting Service within RFE. His efforts to this end proved futile. He then argues that this service could have been started without either White House or State Department approval, if only the Board for International Broadcasting had not lacked "the willpower to make full use of its independence." This is utter nonsense, suggesting a flight from reality.

No doubt RFE and RL made their share of errors. But they did not, as Urban contends, fail their audiences, nor did they ever accept limited goals, even if at times the true goals looked a very long way away. The success of these unique radio stations was not the work of any one group or individual, but of the intelligence, devotion and skills of thousands over a period of almost fifty years. And in spite of Urban's gloomy predictions at the end of his book that the radios would soon be shut down, they continue their work from Prague.

George Urban presents himself in the role of RFE director as the hard-headed, dedicated anti-communist engaged in heroic battles on many fronts, doing his duty without fear or favor. Yet he acknowledges that he had insured that an "escape clause" be written into his contract prior to his becoming RFE director, thus assuring himself of a golden parachute, a precaution undreamed of by his predecessors. The heroes of the Cold War were behind the Iron Curtain, not in Munich.

Peter Coleman writes that Urban's book is "uncomfortable but invaluable." For anyone who knows the work of the radios, uncomfortable it is, if hardly for the reasons Coleman has in mind.

Ralph E. Walter
Munich

WHEN I read the review by Peter Coleman of George Urban's book on Radio Free Europe, I could not believe that his remarks concerned the same organization for which I served as the head of the Polish Service for twenty-five years.

Coleman claims that RFE was, in the beginning, "CIA 'black radio' whose mission included disinformation." Such a preposterous allegation will not be found in Urban's book. The Polish RFE programs were introduced to the Polish audience in May 1952 by two former Polish prime ministers, Stanislaw Mikolajczyk and Tomasz Arciszewski, joined by General Wladyslaw Anders, who led Polish troops to their victory in the battle of Monte Cassino. Our contributors included leading Polish intellectuals associated with the Congress for Cultural Freedom, such as Konstanty Jelenski and Leopold Labedz. Ironically, one of our friends and contributors was Richard Krygier, to whom Coleman dedicated his book on the Congress for Cultural Freedom entitled *The Liberal Conspiracy*. None of the highly respectable individuals with whom RFE was associated would ever agree to participate in the deception of listeners in black propaganda. Directives issued to editors before RFE began broadcasting established a rule that: only information confirmed and originating from reliable sources can be aired; all relevant developments must be covered; news must be separated from

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views; if views make news, they should be quoted only with full attribution; and the reliability of news is more important than speed.

Your readers will learn from Coleman's review that in the 1970s, "Western appeasers within the organization 'blacklisted or blue-penciled' broadcasts by . . . Bernard Levin, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, and Lord Chalfont." On the contrary, all three volumes of Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* were broadcast in ten-minute daily segments spanning more than two years. Bernard Levin and Lord Chalfont were frequently quoted in our press reviews.

To suggest that George Urban finally put RFE on the right track after it had been broadcasting for thirty years is grossly unfair to RFE's founding fathers, such as Professor William Griffith, Paul Henze, Ralph Walter and many others.

Urban was my personal friend and colleague from the late 1940s when we both worked in the BBC European Service at Bush House. I always admired him as a brilliant analyst and scholar. He was not as successful during his brief term as RFE's director and manager. His radio memoirs conveyed too much of his personal frustrations and settling of old accounts to be credible. When in 1994, Poland, grateful to RFE for its role in the Cold War, invited its former leaders to Poznan, George Urban was not among them.

Jan Nowak
Former Director of the Polish Service, RFE

Coleman replies:

RALPH E. Walter is less than fair to George Urban, who in his memoir repeatedly applauded Radio Free Europe's great record of success. (I quoted him three or four times to that effect.) Urban certainly complained about appeasers in RFE and their "agenda of accommodation" but he did not pretend they destroyed its achievement.

Jan Nowak says that Urban's memoir is not "credible." It is indeed a personal statement (subtitled "My War Within the Cold War") and not a formal history. But until the archives are released, we have to welcome such testimony to help assess RFE's successes and failures.

Paul Henze says that RFE never "advocated violence." So did Urban. But in his lengthy chapter on Hungary in 1956, he established that RFE's pugnacious rhetoric in its Hungarian programs encouraged false hopes of Western armed support and to that extent incited the insurrection. Henze insists that RFE always concentrated on "news, information and entertainment", but Urban noted that in 1956 its broadcasts included instruction in methods of guerrilla warfare. Henze also claims that RFE never changed from its inception, whereas Urban documented a "quick" change after "the Hungarian fiasco."

Courting Danger:

BOLTON'S approach to the International Criminal Court ["Courting Danger: What's Wrong With the International Criminal Court", Winter 1998/99] echoes the reasons why the United States abandoned "common law crimes" in 1816 in *United States v. Coolidge*. Judge Joseph Story objected, apparently on the ground that, as a judge, he knew crime when he saw it and could relate it to the needs of society. His approach was rendered irrelevant by the refusal of the attorney-general to bring any more "criminal" indictments to the courts of the federal government in the absence of statute. While "common law crimes" survived for awhile in some state courts, the basic notion—that no single person or institution should be able both to define and punish acts against "society"—was so much a part of our fundamental mindset and its logic so clearly a part of our Constitution that even a jurist as wise as Story could not change it. Now, the approach taken by the framers of the Statute of the International Criminal Court revives the notion by listing as "crimes" offenses so broadly worded that it seems inevitable that "judges" and the "prosecutor" together would fill the role of Plato's guardians. They seem not to have noticed the failure of Plato's system in Sicily due to the inconsistency of the notion of omnipotent guardians with the normative powers of others based on divine law, moral law, amoral customary law, natural law and "comity", the needs of political societies to get

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along with each other even if some abstract notion of "justice" must take a lower place in the political and moral order than the perfections sought by Plato.

Alfred P. Rubin
Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy

JOHN Bolton is right to caution that the United States must keep its wits assembled in considering the new International Criminal Court. The Rome statute, completed in July 1998, is not a perfect job. But it is too early to tell whether the United States can join.

For example, Bolton questions whether covered crimes are defined tightly enough. In March 1999, even while reserving judgment on joining the treaty, the United States is entitled to have a strong delegation at the crucial "prepcom"—UN-ese for "preparatory commission"—to frame the elements of ICC criminal offenses. The United States also wielded strong influence at Rome last summer to match definitions of crimes to U.S. military law.

It is puzzling that Bolton quarrels with the treaty ban on "intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such." This is a fundamental tenet of the law of war, declared in such places as the Commander's Handbook on the Law of Naval Operations issued by the U.S. Department of Defense. Similarly, the ban on "outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment" is a standard set by the 1949 Geneva Conventions, designed to protect women against physical abuse and prisoners of war against taunting public display.

Legal protection of American troops abroad currently rests on Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA)—immunizing our troops from the host country's local criminal authority. Renegotiated SOFAs could shield U.S. servicemen from extradition as well. Advice and consent to the Rome treaty also depends on the Senate's decision that ICC trial procedures meet the standards of fairness required by the U.S. Constitution. We do send defendants to stand trial in systems that are not identical to our own, and courts martial do not match all civilian procedures.

The ICC is not the only way to enforce the humanitarian rules of armed conflict. Professional training and national courts remain key. Armies are needed to interrupt a genocide. But the supplementary strength of an international forum is worth serious attention.

Ruth Wedgwood
U.S. Naval War College and Yale Law School

Bolton replies:

I WISH I could introduce Professor Wedgwood to Professor Rubin: Plato (cited by Professor Rubin) clearly trumps the Commander's Handbook on the Law of Naval Operations (cited by Professor Wedgwood).

Professor Wedgwood should know better than to argue that vague and undefined standards (such as prohibitions against "outrages upon personal dignity") somehow get better when they get older. Indeed, exactly the opposite is true when broad statements about policy (such as a ban on "intentionally directing attacks against" civilians) are converted into strict standards of criminal liability, as the Statute of Rome purports to do. In fact, the treaty's vagueness is directly related to its other manifold inadequacies, as my article describes, which are not correctable merely by substantive or procedural "fixes."

'Orientalism', the Evolution of a Concept:

ONE important point largely absent from Neil McInnes' article "'Orientalism', the Evolution of a Concept" [Winter 1998/99] is that it was the Islamic, not the British, rule that forced its ideology on India.

The British imperialism, claims of Edward Said's theory of "Orientalism" notwithstanding, was quintessentially an economic adventure. The British did not interfere in the cultural and religious life of India. Nor did they force religious conversions. This explains why, even after two hundred years of British rule, Indians still do not carry any feeling of resentment or hatred against the British.

Contrast this to the devastation brought in by

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the Islamic imperialism, which was driven by an extra stimulus of religious triumphalism. For more than seven centuries, India, especially the northern region, bore the brunt of Islamic adventurism, which pushed it to the edge of cultural and religious abyss. And when the British arrived on the scene, Indians, especially the non-converts to Islam, were more than grateful to them for having rescued them from the clutches of Muslim tyranny.

The British rule in India, apart from a few political aberrations, had been a blessing in disguise for the democratic evolution of the country. It is quite absurd to apply Edward Said's concept of "Orientalism" to such a situation.

Randhir Singh Bains
Essex, England

Crazy Over Cuba:

ANDREW BACEVICH'S review of the 1961-63 State Department documents pertaining to Cuba ["Crazy Over Cuba", Winter 1998/99] is a stimulating exercise in historical reconstruction. Evidently, our policymakers were, as he says, "naive, foolish, at times bizarre", even if they were not necessarily as irresponsible as he claims. But would a more conciliatory policy toward Castro have avoided the missile crisis? I doubt it. We tried sweet reason; he became only more intransigent. When we got tough, he got more intransigent still. As for the Soviets, Khrushchev had been shopping around for some time for a way of getting Jupiter missiles out of Turkey; the Cuban revolution simply came along at a convenient moment.

U.S. concern over the contagion of the Cuban revolution seems exaggerated in retrospect. Certainly Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., the arch apologist of Kennedy's policies, now seems to think so, and why not? After all, Castro failed to export his model to Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia or Argentina—countries for whom serious guerrilla movements were trained, financed and deployed. On the other hand, Cuban-sponsored activities helped to undermine fragile civilian governments and polarize the political situation in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, and Cubans were a very useful ally to the Soviets in dozens of countries, most notably Angola, Ethiopia and Nicaragua. Kennedy's intelligence was bad, as was his judgment, but his ultimate purpose—to strangle the Cuban revolution in its cradle—would have saved many lives, including those of thousands of Cuban soldiers who now lie dead in foreign graves. □

Mark Falcoff
American Enterprise Institute

Survivor

Every day,
I think about dying.
About disease, starvation,
violence, terrorism, war,
the end of the world.

It helps
keep my mind off things.

—Roger McGough

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Franz Josef Clinton

Adam Garfinkle

U.S. POLICY toward Europe under the current administration has suffered from really only one flaw—but it's a doozy. The problem is that the Clinton administration has yet to have a single serious synoptic thought about the Continent's future and the U.S. role in it. It discussed its reasons for expanding NATO virtually without reference to the future of the European Union, as if the security of so vast and pivotal an area would not be affected by the potentially revolutionary social, economic and political changes afoot there. It dithered but subsequently took the diplomatic and military lead in Bosnia without considering the effect on the evolution of intra-European security arrangements, a far more important post-Cold War question in the longer run than the future of that hapless province. And it did both these things while insisting that neither action would jeopardize America's "partnership" with Russia, a bizarre assertion that some pundits have since defended on the assumption that history's first blush amounts to its mature verdict.

Nor, except as an afterthought, does consideration seem to have been given to the connection between NATO expansion and U.S. intervention in Bosnia—not to speak of the contemplated intervention in Kosovo—except by way of impromptu post hoc rationalization. The two policies were jostled along separately by noisome headlines or the occasion of a presidential trip abroad, and it has been left mostly to speechwriters, journalists and East European diplomats to offer explanations of how they are related.

ACTUALLY, these relations become vivid if we view them through that hoariest of concepts in our profession: the balance of power, a notion lately demoted in the academy—along with its parent discipline, geopolitics—to a status roughly similar to that of phrenology.

Consider that for at least three centuries before the current one, the Habsburg Empire was a central pillar in European affairs. The Continent's diplomatic machinations, its wars and its truces are unfathomable without it. Especially in the nineteenth century, from the Napoleonic Wars through the convulsions of 1848 to the disaster of World War I, the Habsburg domain was central, geographically as well as politically, to the diplomatic maneuverings that any student of the origin of the Great War knows by heart: the Dreikaiserbund, the German-Austrian alliance of 1879, the Triple Alliance, the Russo-German Reinsurance Treaty, and so on down through that prologue to disaster, the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. Notwithstanding the occasionally destabilizing decisions that came from Vienna, Austria-Hungary kept German and Russian power apart, kept the latter from devouring alone the receding Ottoman domain, and helped balance against Italian, British and French ambitions as well.

This is Adam Garfinkle's last quarterly as executive editor of The National Interest.

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Remove such a key pillar, and confusion and insecurity will invariably follow in train—as they do whenever great empires fall. And indeed, with the Habsburg pillar torn down in 1918, the stage was set for the murderous and anxious history that followed. In the interwar period, Britain, France, Germany and Russia vied to fill the vacuum left by the destruction of the Dual Monarchy, a struggle that in 1939 assumed military form and led to Germany's temporary triumph. That success created a fleeting alliance between the United States, Russia, Britain and France. With the German collapse in 1944-45 came the Russian bid to fill the vacuum, a bid frustrated only in part by the United States, which by 1955 had managed to keep Vienna free of Moscow's hand, though not Prague, Krakow, Budapest, Bratislava and most of the jewels of the old Habsburg crown. When the Russian grip loosened in 1989, and former Habsburg domains were left free (if wary), the United States found itself taking up the old Habsburg imperial task as though driven by a force of nature rather than conscious deliberation.

In short, one way to look at the last eighty years of European history is to see them as a series of partial, temporary, disputatious and occasionally bloody attempts to find a substitute for Habsburg power. And one way to look at the U.S.-led expansion of NATO and its interventions in the Balkans is to see them together as Washington's presumption of the role of imperial Vienna—though with a preponderance of power more analogous to that of late nineteenth-century London or Berlin. Whatever else William Jefferson Clinton has been called in recent months, we may as well add one further name: Franz Josef Clinton.

Evidence of the Great Substitution abounds—recent events in Rambouillet providing the most recent of it. Who was not struck with a déjà vu from the age of great power diktats when Jane Perlez told us in the *New York Times* of February 11 that,

> So far, the arguments . . . of the Kosovo peace conference have not been among the Serbian and ethnic Albanian delegates, who are being kept busy by the negotiators on subjects like a new constitution and elections. The more tricky divisions have been among the hosts—the United States, four European nations and Russia—as they try to resolve their differences on vital issues.

Consult any account of the 1878 Congress of Berlin, which sorted out the consequences of a Russo-Ottoman War under Bismarck's expert guidance, and the essential model of Rambouillet appears.

An even closer approximation to Rambouillet is provided by the protracted attempt from London to clean up the mess of the First and Second Balkan Wars in 1912. While the Turks, Serbs, Romanians, Bulgarians, Macedonians, Albanians and Greeks met in St. James' Palace in the rainy December of that year, the ambassadors of Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Russia and Italy met a few doors away with the British foreign minister, Sir Edward Grey, to manage the real business at hand. Said Grey, "We made the proceedings as informal as those of a committee of friends. We met in the afternoons, generally about four o'clock, and with a short adjournment to an adjoining room for tea, we continued till six or seven."

Even for that friendly "contact group", it was not easy going: "We shall be six skeletons before our work is done", noted the French ambassador, Paul Cambon, in his journal.[1] But, eventually, it was done: borders were drawn and redrawn as opportunistic battles waxed and waned during much of 1913; money and threats were suitably distributed to the locals; and, not least, an independent Albania was created at Vienna's insistence, in order to keep the vexatious Serbs away from the Aegean, and to diminish their capacity to

[1]Both quotes, with original sources, may be found in Alan Palmer, *The Chancelleries of Europe* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), pp. 122-3.

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further roil their neighbors' peace—especially the peace of Austria-Hungary.

ALAS, IT didn't work, and neither may the efforts of the present contact group—also made up of six, as it happens: five of them the same countries that attended in London in 1912, while the United States replaces Austria-Hungary as the sixth—to solve roughly the same problems that bedeviled its predecessors in 1878 and 1913. Not that another Great War is likely to ensue from a failure, and not that America, or even just NATO, will disintegrate if there is one—and, obviously, not that historical analogies lack limits, though it is worth asking how the Habsburgs managed to contain the explosive potential of such a heterogeneous mélange of peoples for so long. What was their formula, and can the United States find a way to match it, lest it come to look less like a global superpower and more like a full-time Mitteleuropean fire brigade?

The Habsburg formula, particularly as it evolved after 1848, consisted of three parts. First and most important was a cluster of supra-national symbols. Second was a willingness to disperse both authority and status within, combined with a fair skill in so doing. Third was the fact that should the first two methods falter, there existed a well-understood willingness to use force to hold things together.

The supra-national symbols consisted chiefly of the person of Emperor Franz Josef himself. While H.G. Wells was not far wrong in describing Habsburg monarchs after Charles V as constituting an "amiable scoundrelism" characterized by "a continuity of thick lips, clumsy chins, and superstition", Franz Josef successfully bridged the years between Metternich and the Great War by the simple tactic of not dying. By the 1870s he had become the object of a deep-seated veneration across all classes of his imperial subjects, and, as Carlton J.H. Hayes once put it, there was "something like awe for the seeming changelessness of the Habsburg monarch in the midst of an otherwise swiftly changing world." Second in the pantheon of supra-national assets was the Church. The Habsburgs were not militant Catholics in the theological sense, only in the social one, their taste for hierarchy being more terrestrial than celestial. Beyond that, the German language, the royal accoutrements of medals, uniforms and corbeilles, and the rumpled sarabande-paced life that characterized the Viennese court rounded out the regime's abstract resources.

As for sharing authority, the German-speakers kept control but learned to bend toward first the Hungarian and then the Slavic elements of the Empire. Even the significant population of Jews, Gypsies and other geographically dispersed minorities did not fare all that badly, this thanks to a certain ramshackle inefficiency that pervaded Austrian administration. Finally, of course, there was a secret police and an army that took its orders in German.

How will Franz Josef Clinton and his successors compare with such a set-up? Well, achieving the requisite level of inefficiency should not be a problem, as the United States prolongs its constabulary role in the region and turns its theater military commanders into de facto proconsuls. Everyone, too, can understand orders given in American English these days. On the other hand, while the U.S. capacity to use force is beyond doubt, its ability to use it purposefully is not. Even more obviously problematic is that the Habsburg Empire was, ultimately, a single political unit whose survival depended on policy success, while American power is merely in, not of, Central and Eastern Europe. So far, too, Washington has not shown much willingness to share real authority—neither the Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Croats nor Hungarians are at Rambouillet—and Washington is certainly not going to produce a leader sixty-eight years in office to embody the state and ensure continuity as Franz Josef once did.

That puts a special premium on whatever supra-national inducements to peace and social tranquility U.S. policy can offer. What are those inducements? They are, simply put,

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democracy and a heartfelt if imperfectly understood invitation for these former Habsburg lands to become full members of the U.S.-led Western community of nations. Will that be enough? Will lofty ideals and abstract associations trump "blood" and the will to power? If they do, Europe will truly be at a hinge of history. If so, too—if these lands become part of a security community so successful as to make war among and within them as improbable as it now is in the western parts of Europe—it means that the Wilsonian contention will gain a certain vindication, and that realists will owe several and sundry apologies.

And if not, then not. Without doubting either the existence of American "soft power" or the extent of novelty that the future might hold, allow a temperamental realist his skepticism. In any event, sooner or later we shall see. □

The Decisive Event

The history of our century and its monsters all came from the belly of World War I. The rise of Nazism in Germany is incomprehensible without taking into account the national frustration provoked by defeat and the treaty of Versailles. On the same plane, the pacifism displayed by the democracies that were to guarantee the treaty, in the face of Hitler's repeated demands, was due to their demographic weakness. France had lost 1.4 million (out of a total of 9 million dead for all combatants) in the first world war. Roughly a tenth of the youngest active male population was razed from the civilian population. Add to this 2.8 million wounded, some very seriously: gassed, disfigured, crippled, or mentally ill. France's weakness in the face of Germany was as much biological as it was political.

Much of the Soviet Union's foundation was laid in 1917-18. . . . Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany also took form after the first world war. World War I had left all the belligerent nations receptive to the "Great Leader" form of government: state propaganda, unquestioned belief in your leader, the concentration of resources to the national effort, an acceptance of restrictions and regimes of suspicion and surveillance.

. . . All treaties signed since 1919 were designed to forge a Europe of democratic, unified nations. We have since discovered that the resulting frontiers were traced approximately and are the source of current resentments. An improbable Yugoslavia, a doubtful Czechoslovakia, ethnic minorities spread around, threaten to produce great tensions. What we thought had been engraved in stone has once again become a subject of controversy.

—*Michel Winock*, L'Express, *November 11, 1998*

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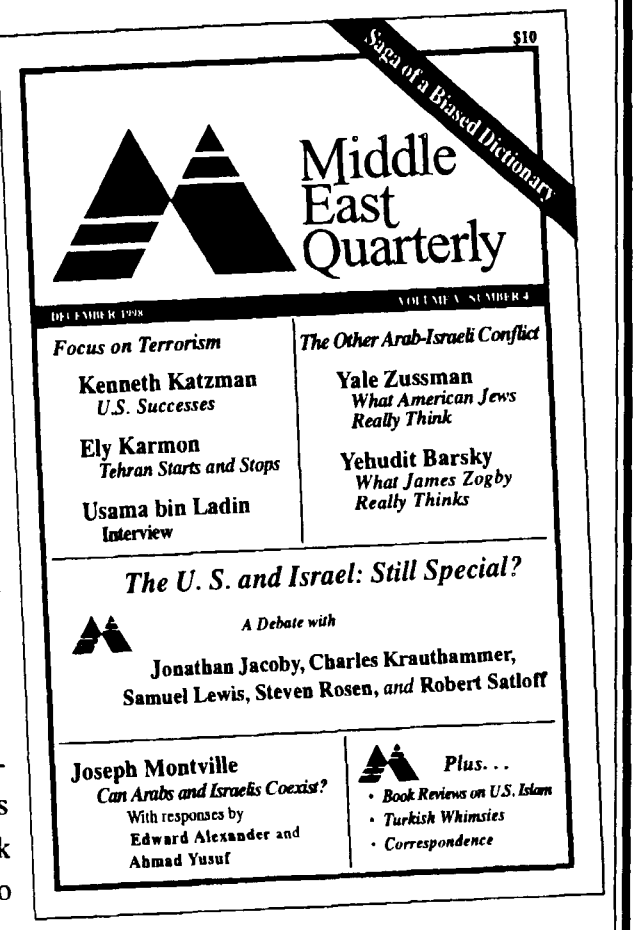

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"NO ONE, and certainly no American, should underestimate the extent to which Eurofederalism is inspired by a resentment of the power and success of the United States."

—Conrad Black

"THE revolution of 1991 was not as revolutionary as it seemed. The termites had long been chewing away within, even before the wrecking balls of glasnost and perestroika assailed from without."

—Fritz Ermarth

"CHINESE nationalism has inadvertently incubated an ideal of individual rights and individual self-determination within its discourse on national rights."

—John Fitzgerald

"WE have free-floating, evolving standards of 'law' defined by international bureaucrats. We have organized advocacy groups in transnational coalitions. And we may soon have U.S. courts applying this law at the behest of these groups. In other words, all the elements of EU-style governance are already in place."

—Jeremy Rabkin

"WESTERN ALLIES seemed often to be chastising the Greeks for not behaving like Scandinavians—and in the Balkans at that!"

—Loukas Tsoukalis

"THE quality of Atlantic culture, especially its pop-cultural side, is one indictment in Europe's charge-sheet against the United States. But the official European response—to subsidize even worse local imitations of American trash—hardly improves matters."

—John O'Sullivan

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